

MEMORIAL  
OF  
MARGARET E. BRECKINRIDGE.

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MEMORIAL

OF

MARGARET E. BRECKINRIDGE.



PHILADELPHIA:

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1865.

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OBITUARY NOTICES.



## OBITUARY NOTICES.

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From the PRINCETON STANDARD.

THE intelligence received to-day of the death of Miss MARGARET E. BRECKINRIDGE, of this place, who died on the 27th inst. at Niagara Falls, after a somewhat protracted illness, will sadden many hearts in this community. Her devotion to her country, since the rebellion broke out, has cost her her life. From her exposure to the hardships and diseases of hospital service, and her unceasing labors for the relief of our sick and wounded soldiers, her health became so impaired that the late severe trial which befell her in the death of her brother-in-law, Col. Peter A. Porter, who recently fell at the head of his regiment in Virginia, reduced her prostration below a rallying point.

Miss Breckinridge was a daughter of the late Rev. Dr. John Breckinridge, and a granddaughter of the late Rev. Dr. Samuel Miller. Like her father, she had a

magic power of securing warm personal friends wherever she went, and her death will be mourned in a wide circle of kindred and friends in every part of our country. She was a young woman of much energy, talent, and intelligence; and if her extensive correspondence during the last three years,—a portion of which was conducted on behalf of sick soldiers and their friends, and is filled with thrilling incidents,—could be examined, her patriotic and Christian labors would be more highly appreciated. She made a profession of religion when quite young, and died calmly in a full assurance of faith.

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From the BUFFALO COMMERCIAL ADVERTISER.

TEN years ago, three of the most powerful nations of the world were engaged—two of them against the third—in deadly conflict in a territory smaller than several of the States in the American Union. Such was the nature of the soil and the moisture of the climate, and especially such were the requirements of military routine and official circumlocutions, that the sick and wounded soldiers of the Allies were subject to unnecessary and grievous neglect and suffering. So

frightfully true was this at the commencement of the siege of Sebastopol, that the poor soldiers preferred the hardships and discomfort of the trenches and the camp to the horrors of the hospital. And when the kindly heart, quick perception, and resolute will of a single woman, cutting the knots of official tape, brought order out of confusion, system out of chaos, and devoted herself with the zealous tenderness of her woman's heart to the care and nursing of the sick and wounded soldiers, she was hailed as an angel of mercy, and her name and memory were at once canonized in the Christian heart of the world.

The war of the Allies in the Crimea had its single Florence Nightingale. The war of the United States has a corps of them. One of the latter has just fallen a martyr in this sacred vocation. MISS MARGARET E. BRECKINRIDGE, who recently died at Niagara Falls, was the daughter of the late Rev. John Breckinridge, D.D., of Kentucky. Her mother was a daughter of the late Rev. Samuel Miller, D.D., of Princeton, N. J. Miss Breckinridge inherited the vigorous intellect, the quick perception, and the strong religious temperament for which the family has long been distinguished. Her physical organization was slight and delicate in the ex-

treme, but more than ordinary power was imparted to it by a strong mind, a resolute will, and a dominant and devoted sense of duty. Seldom has so frail a casket contained so rich a gem.

She entered the hospital service on the Mississippi, in Gen. Grant's department, in the winter of 1862. Possessing a fine musical talent which had been well cultivated, a comprehensive and tenacious memory, and being familiar from the years of her earliest instruction with the sacred truths and promises of the Bible, she soon became a special favorite with the hopelessly sick, the wounded and dying soldiers. Ministering both to their physical and moral wants, when all hope of restoring the suffering body had perished, she strove to rekindle those better hopes which have their fruition beyond the grave. She repeated and explained the loving invitations and comforting promises of her divine Master, and then, in the touching tones of her bird-like voice, sang to the departing spirit those sacred lyrics which had been familiar to all of them in their early years, and to many of them through all the years of their lives. And often did the last feeble pressure of the hand whose strength had departed, and the last serene and earnest look of the dying soldier's



closing eyes, express the gratitude which his tongue was too feeble to utter, and evince the consoling assurances which her ministrations had brought him. To them she was indeed a "ministering spirit."

It was in the lowlands of the Mississippi that she was first attacked with one of those obstinate camp diseases which too often become chronic. Leaving the department of the Mississippi in order to recruit her wasted strength, she spent several months with friends at the East. In May last, she entered again upon hospital duty, near Philadelphia, but was soon obliged to leave her post by an attack of erysipelas. On partially recovering from this she came to Niagara for the twofold purpose of sharing the sorrow of a relative who had recently been sorely afflicted by the death of an only brother upon the field of battle, and of recruiting her own health and strength so that she might return again to her labors of mercy.

She had even then within her system the seeds of that fatal typhoid fever peculiar to camps, which was soon developed in all its strength, and of which, complicated with other difficulties, she died on Wednesday, July 27th.

Her letters from camps and hospitals, and while

absent from them to recruit her exhausted powers, concerning the soldiers, their cares, comforts, and wants, were widely read, and many tearful eyes have testified to the deep sympathy and interest which they awakened.

She rests from her labors, and her works have followed her to that better land where neither wars nor wounds nor tears nor suffering are known.

H.

NIAGARA FALLS, July 31, 1864.

MEMORIAL.



## MEMORIAL.

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To these brief notices, which first brought to many hearts the sad tidings of the death of one who was loved wherever she was known, we would add a few facts and a few scattered reminiscences which have been gathered from various sources; and out of all these we would weave a little chaplet, bearing the impress of her character, to add its tribute of affection to the marble which covers the resting-place and is sacred to the memory of MARGARET ELIZABETH BRECKINRIDGE.

She was born in Philadelphia, March 24th, 1832. Through both her parents she was descended from ancestors who, in the State as well as in the Church, had labored for their generation and left an impress on the times in which they lived. Her paternal grandfather was JOHN BRECKINRIDGE, of Kentucky, who in 1806 was taken from a high position in the National

Senate to fill the office of Attorney-General of the United States, and died while yet a young man, soon after taking his seat in the Cabinet.

Her father, the REV. JOHN BRECKINRIDGE, D.D., was his second son, and bore his name. He was educated at the College of New Jersey, and while a student there, and looking forward to a career of worldly honor and distinction, he became interested in an extensive and powerful revival of religion which occurred in that Institution in the year 1815, and which gave to the church many who have since been standard-bearers in her service. He was among those whose aims in life were then entirely changed; and he may truly be said from that time to have consecrated himself to the service of God. He studied for the ministry in the Theological Seminary at Princeton, and entered the church, combining with his earnest spirit a high order of talent. In every situation he kept in view the work of his office, and made it honorable; and though he passed away in the prime of his manhood, his memory is yet fresh in many hearts and in many pulpits; his self-sacrificing labors were of inestimable value to the church; and the record of his devoted piety, his great ability,

and rare eloquence is a priceless legacy to his family.

He had been a pastor both in Lexington, Ky., and in Baltimore; and, in the latter city, especially, his influence can hardly be estimated as an instrument in God's hand for reviving the churches there, and calling them up to the full measure of their responsibility.

In the year 1832, above mentioned, Dr. Breckinridge was one of the Secretaries of the Board of Education of the Presbyterian Church, and was residing in Philadelphia, whither he had removed from Baltimore the year before, in obedience to the summons of the General Assembly.

In 1836, he was elected a Professor in the Theological Seminary at Princeton, and removed with his family to that place.

Mrs. Breckinridge was the daughter of the Rev. Dr. Samuel Miller, of Princeton, who, "being dead, yet speaketh" to the church through those productions of his pen which must ever be his most extensive and enduring memorial.

Through her mother, Mrs. Breckinridge was descended from men who had adorned the pulpit and the bar of New Jersey, who had established her seats of learning, represented her in the

National councils, and had been employed in agencies of trust during the eventful times of the Revolution. These all rest from their labors, but their works follow them, and still benefit the State in which they lived.

Margaret E. Breckinridge was deprived of her mother at the age of six years, and left an entire orphan only three years afterward; but she inherited and retained through life much that was characteristic of both her parents. Those who had been intimate with them, could recognize in her many of those graces of mind and heart which, wherever Dr. and Mrs. Breckinridge resided, drew around them a circle of warm and lasting friends. Perhaps, as conducing to this, there was no trait of their character more strongly marked than that feeling of common brotherhood and sympathy which, even as a natural instinct, is so much stronger in some than in others, and which, when sanctified and regulated by religion, can make its possessor a blessing to the world.

The subject of this memoir inherited this quality in large measure, and used it as a practical power. Wherever she could bring comfort to the afflicted, relief to the wearisome hours of



sickness, sympathy to the home sick stranger, or pleasure to the social circle, she hesitated not to sacrifice her time and convenience to the willing performance of these duties. She had, indeed,

“A heart at leisure from itself,  
To soothe and sympathize.”

Some, to whom she thus ministered, have gone before her to another world; but many still remain whose hearts will respond to the mention of these kind services and to the memories which they recall.

From the time of her mother's death, Margaret was committed to the care of her grandparents at Princeton, and in their family she grew up to womanhood, though with frequent and long absences; first at school, and afterward in visiting her relatives at a distance, where her stay was necessarily protracted.

The ties of kindred are often felt the most strongly where homes have been desolated and families scattered. The heart clings to the broken fragments with the full measure of its affections. It was so in the case of this orphan. Of her immediate family only a brother and two sisters remained,—one being the issue of a sec-

ond marriage; and, though much separated from them, they were almost her idols. Between herself and her sister, Mary Cabell, the warmest attachment always existed. Until the death of their father, they both resided with their grandparents; but, after that event, their homes were not the same, and a frequent interchange of visits was made doubly pleasant, and seemed to awaken between them an emulation of improvement, which could not but be salutary.

Margaret's school years were principally devoted to the more solid branches of education, which rapidly developed a mind fond of almost every branch of study and quick to seize upon its fruits, instead of resting, like too many young people, in the mere letter of mechanical instruction. Neither did her education, like that of many others, end with her school. Until the time—more than three years before her death—when her heart and hands became absorbed in work for her country, she never gave up her prescribed plans of study, but continued them, with more or less regularity, through all the temporary changes of her residence. It is true, that these frequent and long absences from home were not favorable to her advance in the severer

studies which she at first undertook, and which, while not an essential part of female education, are ornaments often of great practical value. But for her improvement in the lighter branches of literature, these changes were not unfavorable. Her retentive memory safely guarded the fruit plucked from many a stem in her wanderings; and her mind became a store-house where were treasured up and ready to be used or to be imparted, facts of history, individual annals of those renowned in its narrative, as well as much that was delightful from the poetic page and from the painter's historic art.

For such acquisitions, and for forming the tastes which lead to them, she had unusual advantages among the friends whom she visited; and not the least of these at the house of her brother-in-law,—Peter A. Porter, of Niagara Falls,—who, long endeared to the sisters as a relative, in 1852 became the husband of the older one.

Now, that this noble patriot has poured out his life upon the field of bloody strife, and the grave has closed over him, we may be allowed to say what he was, and how much his family, his friends, and his country have lost. Descended

from those who had been honored in the council-chamber and on the battle-field, and, having enjoyed and well improved the best advantages for a liberal education, both in his own country and in the Universities of Germany, he returned endowed with varied and elegant accomplishments to his home at Niagara,—that spot of America whose wonders demand a visit from every traveler. There his house was the resort of literary and scientific men from every quarter, at the same time retaining its life-long and well-earned character of welcoming the poor and friendless to its charities and sympathies.

It was in such a home, and surrounded by everything that could make this life happy, and afford pleasure and profit to the friends who surrounded him, that the call of his country came to him, and he hesitated not to respond to it. Actuated, not by a wild enthusiasm, but by a conscientious view of the duty which men of his rank owed to their country and to the armies which had been gathered mainly from its sturdy yeomanry, and were pouring out their blood like water, he gathered from his own neighborhood a regiment of young men who were willing to go under the leadership of one so much trusted,

and led them forth to the dangerous service. No after-temptations of office or emolument could induce him to change these convictions of duty, or forsake those who, from many a fireside, had been committed to his care.

“With steady pulse and deepening eye,  
Where bugles call,” he said, “and rifles gleam,  
I follow though I die!”

He followed and died. How many such sacrifices have been laid upon this bloody altar!

To her sister, Mrs. Porter, Margaret felt that she was also indebted for much of the stimulus which had quickened her to mental life and action. Many circumstances had combined to lead them both out of the common track of aimless existence, and to give them a high value for intellectual attainment. And they were not without the talents necessary for such attainments. Especially were the sisters gifted with more than ordinary musical abilities, both of voice and ear; and Margaret often regretted that this valuable accomplishment had not been more fully recognized in her education. Probably, however, no one regretted this except herself, at least with regard to her vocal acquirements. She

had received sufficient instruction to give an impetus to her natural talents, and to refine and polish the exuberance of nature, and not enough, as it is too often conducted, to warp and fetter the deep music of the heart. She, as well as her sister, was remarkable for the simplicity and feeling of her execution; and they were often eagerly listened to by those who turned carelessly from more artistic performances. And, especially in later years, when her voice was so often employed in singing to the sick and dying soldier the hymns of his childhood, or those "songs of faith and hope" which soothe and comfort the heart, and sometimes carry the sound of the Gospel to ears that would be shut against a more formal approach,—it was then that the simplicity and deep feeling of her voice met their full reward.

Miss Breckinridge was early accustomed to the free use of her pen, both in letter-writing and in miscellaneous composition; most of which, however, was strictly private. Her frequent separations from her sister and brother had led to a regular correspondence with them; and with many of her school-companions she maintained an intercourse of this kind for a number of years,

until it was superseded by more immediate claims upon her time. This constant practice gave her an easy style; and, though she never claimed the merit of authorship, her pen was ready for any occasion when it could incite to useful action or gratify the wishes of friends. Of late years it was employed almost entirely in the same service which absorbed her whole mind. She wrote many letters and newspaper paragraphs with regard to the pressing wants of the soldiers, and the duties and capabilities of American women in those critical times,—then more critical than ever afterwards. These were circulated more or less widely, and are known to have excited in many neighborhoods a practical and enlightened interest for the country and its brave defenders, which resulted in a liberal and continued effort for the supply of their wants.

It was not until the year 1850 that Miss Breckinridge made a public profession of religion. From her earliest years she had been faithfully trained in the word and doctrine, by parents and grandparents, who lived as well as died in the faith, and all the blessings of the covenant were hers, by what may truly be called a divine right. It is not known, however, that

before this time she experienced anything more than the usual serious but often transitory impressions which can hardly fail to accompany such a training.

At the beginning of the year 1850, a few months before she united herself with the church, her grandfather, the Rev. Dr. Miller, was taken from his family, and from the church which he had so long served. His strength had failed gradually through many weeks of tedious confinement, and this granddaughter had shared with other members of the family the duty and the privilege of reading to him during many of the wearisome hours of sickness. She ascribed to this reading, which always began with the Bible and was mingled with many remarks and words of exhortation from him, much of her more permanent religious impression, and she ever remembered these seasons with gratitude and tender interest.

She also acquired, under the tuition of her faithful and excellent grandmother, from example as well as from precept, a habit which remained with her through life, and which is as essential to the Christian's growth as is a regular supply of food to the body. She had a stated



time set apart every day for the devotional and prayerful reading of the Scriptures. More than an hour was thus spent; and every year she felt more and more how essential was this daily intercourse with things unseen, this fixing of the anchor within the veil; how essential to the comfort as well as to the growth of the Christian. And she may truly be said to have enjoyed her religion, and to have realized her Saviour as her friend and companion.

It was during a revival of religion which occurred in the spring of 1850, when more than seventy persons united themselves, for the first time, with the church, and under the ministry of the Rev. W. E. Schenck, that Miss Breckinridge enrolled her name among the members of the First Presbyterian Church of Princeton, and she never regretted the decisive step.

The religion of Jesus Christ, when it begins its perfect work in the heart of man, falls upon the peculiarities and inequalities of human character like snow upon the surface of the earth, which covers and modifies everything with its pure mantle; but still, hill and valley, rock and furrow maintain their outline, and show what lies beneath.

These peculiarities God uses for his own glory in the different departments of his work. He requires service as various as the characters which he has formed, and which, though they partake of all the imperfections of our fallen nature, he can adapt to his use and fit them for his purpose.

Miss Breckinridge's religion partook of the energy of her character, and was not idle or unprofitable. She entered immediately upon many of those paths of usefulness which are open to every one. She was a constant and faithful Sunday-school teacher; laboring especially among the colored people, for whom many of the circumstances of her life had given her a special interest. She had become by inheritance the owner of several slaves in Kentucky, who were a source of great anxiety to her; and the will of her father, though carefully designed to secure their freedom, had become so entangled with State laws, subsequently made, as to prevent her, during her life, from carrying out what was his wish as well as her own. By her will she directed that they should be freed as soon as possible, and something be given them to provide against the first uncertainties of self-support.

Miss Breckinridge's religion also partook of the fearlessness of her character. Though perhaps morbidly averse to everything like Phariseism, or a studied dialect of religious expression, yet she did not fear to speak on the subject in social intercourse, especially with her young friends, and to show plainly under whose banner she served. Some of these still remember the benefit which they have received from her conversation. Her aims were high in religion as well as in the pursuit of knowledge; and she tried to draw others with her up the toilsome though delightful ascent. A young friend remarks in a note written just after her death, "She has often stimulated me to improvement, though unconscious of it herself, by an incidental remark about a book, or an allusion indicating how much she had read and studied."

Miss Breckinridge possessed an unusual facility in conversation,—partly natural and partly the result of circumstances. During her visits in widely different parts of the country, she had been much thrown among strangers, in situations where she felt herself called upon for a large part of their entertainment as guests. This had produced a marked effect upon her conver-

sational habits, and the freedom thus acquired gave her unusual facility in recommending what is good to those around her in private life, as well as in the hospital and by the bed of the dying.

A large part of Miss Breckinridge's spiritual training was in the school of affliction. The first great trial of her life was the death of her sister, Mrs. Porter, which occurred in 1854, very little more than two years after her marriage, and while she was enjoying everything that the world could give to make her happy. She died of cholera, after an illness of a few hours, but not without time to look consciously into another world, and to leave evidence that she had not put off till then the necessary preparation for the exchange. Miss Breckinridge had just left her sister in health, and had been a few days at home, when the terrible news reached her. It was one of those fearful shocks which leave a life-long scar upon the heart, which time may cover over, but cannot efface; as the tree which the lightning has scathed, in after-years of growth, and it may be even of luxuriance, still shows its wounds. The anticipations of the future had been bright between these sisters; promising that, after so

many separations, one happy home would oftener unite them; and, when this cup was dashed from her lips, there seemed to be no earthly stream that could take its place.

Until near the time of her own death, she hardly ever mentioned the name of her sister without a change of countenance and of voice, which showed how deep was her feeling. These private sorrows, however, were never allowed to sadden the hours of family or of social intercourse. She was naturally of a cheerful disposition, and was also conscientiously thoughtful of the claims of those around her. No one who ever enjoyed an evening of her fireside companionship could forget its attractions. Old and young, children and those of riper years, felt the fascination of her bright and cheerful conversation, and regretted her absence.

But we will hasten to that period of Miss Breckinridge's life which we especially wish to commemorate,—the time of her short but earnest work for the army, and through that for the country. The interval which we pass over was spent as usual, divided between her homes at the East and West; and during this time she was in the habit of writing occasionally for the *Prince-*

*ton Standard*, under the *nom de plume* of "A Bohemian," such incidents of travel and fugitive thoughts as might gratify her friends at home. We will give two or three of these short articles as reminiscences of those years, and as the first productions of her pen, which was afterward devoted to the service of her country.

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PRINCETON STANDARD—CHILDREN'S COLUMN.

### The Little Ray of Sunlight.

BY A BOHEMIAN.

THERE was once a little ray of sunlight—of golden, beautiful sunlight; but I am sorry to say, that like some other little people I know, this little ray of sunlight was very discontented, and had a sad habit of grumbling and finding fault. Well, one fine, bright winter's day all the other sunbeams were shining away with all their might, dancing over the water, sparkling on the snow till it looked like great heaps of diamonds, shining on the steeples and vanes of all the churches in the city, where what I am going to tell you happened, till they shone like gold and silver, and going on as if they were crazy; and yet, when everybody else was so happy, what must this little sunbeam do but grumble worse than ever. He was in a terrible humor, talking away

to himself: "It is no use for me to shine; the other sunbeams are just as bright as I am; nobody would ever miss me, I am so little, if I should go out and never shine again. I am of no use at all."

Now, all the time that he was grumbling in this way, he was wandering carelessly over the roof of an old house, so forlorn and dismal looking it was enough almost to make a sunbeam sad. The windows were broken, the shutters hung loosely, and creaked in the wind, and everything was as dreary and wretched as it could be. Well! what should this little sunbeam find in the roof, as he went groping over it, but a little narrow crack just large enough for him to peep through. I cannot say that I think peeping through a crack or a key-hole a nice habit for any one, but still it is a way sunbeams have always had, and as nobody seems to think any less of them for it, I suppose it was all right in our little sunbeam to peep in, and see all he could, and indeed it was not a very pleasant sight; but after he looked in and lay in one long slanting ray across the little bed in the corner of the poor old garret it looked a little brighter. There was only one little window, and so many of its panes were broken and stuffed with rags, to keep out the cold winds and rain, that you could see nothing but the dark walls of the opposite house, that rose up so much higher, you could not get one peep at the blue sky above.

There was no fire in the rickety old stove, and no furniture beside that in the room, but a broken chair and a little pallet in the corner. By the side of it a woman was kneeling with her face covered, and stretched upon it a little child, as still and white as if she were only an

image made of the cold snow outside. Her eyes were closed, and the little puny arms clung tight about the neck of the kneeling woman, but as the sunbeam fell so suddenly and hopefully across her face, she raised her head, and holding up her arms to meet it, cried: "Oh! mother! mother! you will let me go now. See the beautiful light God has sent down to take me up to heaven," and with one little, quivering sigh, she fell back upon the pillow. Perhaps her soul did go up to God, with the little sunbeam—but after that I am sure he never grumbled any more, and was the brightest little ray—the very busiest and most hopeful of all the rest.

Dear little children! do you know what I want to teach you from this story? I am sure you can tell. It is this, that none of you are so little, and so unnoticed, but that God has something for you to do in the world. There is some one you can comfort and brighten, by your gay little faces and bright hearts, and by being gentle, patient, and meek tempered. May be you think you are not bright enough to be a ray of sunlight, but then you know you can at least be the *little crack* for the sunlight to shine through.

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For the STANDARD.

### Growing up to Things.

WHENEVER I fall to thinking about that power of association of which I have spoken before, I find myself branching off into a train of thought relating to another



subject, but one closely connected with it and equally curious and interesting ; that is, the way in which we outgrow our impressions ; or, to put it differently, the way in which we grow up to things.

Do you not find that your notions of height, and size, and distance are vastly different from what they were in your youth ; so that if you come back after a long absence to accustomed scenes you can hardly believe that the change you perceive is in yourself and not in them ?

Prominent in your early recollections, as in my own, may be a high, old-fashioned mantle-piece, such a mantle-piece as is a constant distress to a child of inquiring mind, staring before him as an actual tower of Babel, impossible for him. You can just remember the time when your father or your big brother, after carrying you round the room on his shoulder, deposited you on the smooth, broad shelf, from which you gazed down on things below you with very much the same feelings that you now look off from some high table-land. Its actual uses, too, were calculated to tantalize you still more, as the very impossibility of your reaching it made it a place of deposit for all forbidden delights. There was laid your sister's new book, which you had already deprived of both backs and the title-page. There, too, oh cruelty ! right within view were placed all such articles of food as had on other occasions proved how slender was your regard for the eighth commandment. By the time you are tall enough to climb up, and with much exertion and holding very tight, can flatten your little nose against the carved mantle-edge, and sweep the smooth length with your inquisitive eyes, you are sent

off to school. Years have passed since then, and now, when you stand leaning against it, you smile as you recall your childish notions of its great height, and laugh wonderingly over the fears and longings which were such serious matters in your child-life. The simple truth is, you have grown up to the mantle-piece.

So too it is with distance. Places that once seemed very far off you consider now quite within easy walking distance. What used to be a journey for your little feet you talk of now as going "round the corner." Have you never observed how hard it is to get a correct view of the dimensions of anything from a person who has not seen it since his childhood? Even if you try it yourself you will find a constant tendency to exaggeration in your notions and recollections. A boy who has been taken from a country home and introduced into city life, will carry into his manhood an idea of grandeur and extent in connection with his early home which will astonish him if he returns to it in later years. Everything will look shrunken. He will hardly be able to persuade himself that the fields have not been narrowed in, and the fences made lower. He will at first sight find fault with the last proprietor for cutting a piece off of the garden. He will be sure the well has been moved nearer to the house; that the swing has been trifled with, because, he says, it used to be so high, and is now only a very moderate affair. The very doors and windows will look as if in the extremity of their loneliness they had crowded together for companionship. In fact the place he thought so large, so grand, is just a modest little farm. It is in all respects just what it was when he looked back at it through his

tears; but he, ah! that is it, he has grown up to it and is a man! I went not long ago, the first time for years, to a place once familiar, which had undergone many alterations. One single room remained as it had always been, and there I went for refuge from the strange, unfamiliar looks that greeted me on every side. "Yes," I said, as I stepped across the threshold, "this looks like an old friend; but why have you made it so much smaller, what need was there to move in the walls?" Those who were with me smiled, but it was long before they could persuade me that the room was really unaltered—that I had grown up to it.

The same entire change of impression we all notice in regard to time. We know how proverbial it is that the years seem apparently shorter as we advance in life. The mention of a year gives a child an idea of painful length; to an old man it seems a point—a dream. Most striking of all is this change of impression when it affects our relations with those about us. You can think of some one perhaps who was the object of your childish awe or admiration, some one that you never thought of years afterward without a mental obeisance. At last in the course of events you meet again, and though it is unfair, you do feel a pang of disappointment. You say to yourself, "Why, I thought he was a very tall man," or you fancy he is less cultivated and intelligent than he used to be, or may be, poor man, he never was such a Solon as you thought him. At any rate, he is the same that he always was,—if anything improved,—and you have grown up to him, that is all the change. A few years make a wonderful difference in the fitness of men as companions for one another.

A boy of ten and a man of twenty will take little pleasure in each other's society. Ten years later, the man of twenty and the man of thirty may be most congenial friends. In ten years more the difference between men of thirty and forty years will be hardly noticeable, and ten years later they might be taken for men of precisely the same age. I have heard a story of a lady who must have had peculiar and hopeless ideas on this subject of growing up to our associates. She was to be married to a man sixty years old, she herself being thirty. When she was rallied about the disparity of age, she replied, "Oh, I don't mind it now; but just think, when I am sixty he will be one hundred and twenty!" There are certain people, however, to whom we never do grow up. No absence or lapse of years can wear away the feelings of awe, and even in some cases of positive dread with which they have inspired us. I think, for instance, it must require a large amount of cool self-possession to venture on a joke or take any liberty with a man who once led your childish feet up the steep ascent of knowledge by the assistance of a ferrule or a dunce-cap. I remember reading of an eminent man in England who, to the last years of his life, never heard the name of his schoolmaster mentioned without a thrill of apprehension. He had not been an uncommonly severe teacher, but his scholar, though far above him in position and power, had not yet grown up to him.

At the beginning of the war which for four years desolated our country, one idea, to the exclusion of every other, seemed to take possession of the mind of Miss Breckinridge. To do what she could, and all that she could, to aid in the fierce struggle against rebellion, was the object ever before her eyes and filling her heart. During the first of these eventful years she was detained at her home in Princeton, by duties which she considered paramount; but still it was a year of constant and laborous service. Her heart and her hands answered readily to the calls which came so urgently in those early days of the war, when supplies and comforts of every kind were demanded from a government and a country entirely unprepared for the emergency. It was then even more necessary than afterward that private exertion should be added to the gigantic efforts of public officers, and she felt the duty and earnestly endeavored to meet it. It may truly be said that, while she remained at home, her thoughts and her hands never wandered from the work of preparing and packing those articles needed for the army, which are now so well known in every community, and

her frequent appeals to others were seldom unsuccessful.

“A Word about the War,” written by her while thus engaged, may be interesting, as a tribute to that spirit of liberty which bore the people unflinchingly through four long and weary years of warfare and bloodshed, to come forth a regenerated nation.

From the PRINCETON STANDARD.

#### A Word about the War.

It always seemed to me a most unfair arrangement that armies should be made to fight the battles of individuals; that when some belligerent old king could not live in peace with his royal neighbors, or coveted some tempting island, or choice little fortification, which he could neither cheat nor cajole them out of, he should assemble his peaceably inclined and well disposed subjects, and make them settle it by force of arms.

Goliath's plan of deciding the whole thing by single combat was sensible and humane, though he did not mean it so, and I have wished devoutly that all warlike kings could be compelled to enter a “ring” in sight of their respective armies, and settle their own disputes. Two good results would follow: first, in all probability their subjects would so be happily rid of them; and second, much blood and treasure would be spared. The wars of modern times are more plausible, and generally more

abstract in their objects than those of earlier days, but I can as little imagine now as then, any heartiness or real patriotism among the mass of those who go to war under a monarchy. Look, for instance, at the late wars of Great Britain. Do you suppose that most of those who wasted away in the Crimea, or fell at the Redan and on the heights of Alma, cared a rush for that nice question as to the balance of power which they had been sent there to adjust, or that a whole-souled love of Britain animated them? Or when the British soldier felt his death wound on the coast of China, was it much comfort to him to know that England had gained her point, and that the Celestials were to chew opium whether they wanted to or not? Even during the war for the suppression of the Indian rebellion, enthusiasm and love of country struggled with many doubtful thoughts which pointed backward to oppressions through which those troublesome possessions were gained, and anxious hearts questioned, though they might not whisper it, whether they had a right to hope for peace and comfort from them.

From this turn to our own land and see what war can be under a republic.

Talk as you may of the horrors of this civil conflict that is about to burst upon us, yet when you think of the holy cause for which we fight, when you remember how a nation of loyal hearts, roused from their trusting security, greeted that cause with a whirlwind of loving recognition that shook the land, when you consider who those are that go forth to fight for it, is there not a fitness, a grandeur in it, such as war has never yet known? England has her standing army ready at her sovereign's

call, but England never saw what we have seen. She never saw the hills and valleys start to life with armed men, and from the Eastern seaboard, the Northern hills, the Western prairies, and the sunny plains and mountain sides which rebellion thought to claim, saw the growing streams pour inward to a common center, leaving in their track the deserted workshop, the silent wheel, the idle tool, and the ungathered harvest. All was forgotten but the danger threatening the country in which each man was a sovereign, the city which belonged alike to all, and the rulers whom the right of suffrage had proclaimed the people's choice. Is not this as it should be? Surely they only who govern themselves can fight heartily and bravely for the preservation of that noble right of self-government.—There is a legend of a holy man to whom God spoke at midnight, and said, "Rise and write what I shall tell thee;" but he answered, "Lord, I have no light;" and God said, "Rise, and write as I bid thee, and I will give thee light;" so he obeyed. His fingers sought the pen, and as he touched it to the parchment, his hand glowed with light that streamed from under it and illumined all the chamber.

So it has been with us. It was the voice of God that roused us to see the peril which menaced liberty and union. It was only for the rescue of such liberty and such a Union as ours that a nation could have been so roused, and therefore from this very uprising comes new light and strength, for that Union must be worth our lives and fortunes, the possibility of whose destruction has called a nation to its feet. Yes, good seceding brothers, the Union is worth all that we can give;



“there are many things dearer to a nation than even blood and treasure,” and we must bring you home like the prodigal, and restore to you all that you have madly flung away, whatever it may cost us. You may hug to your bosoms the narrow liberties and loose twisted union of your new confederacy for a little while, but your waking will come as surely as ours. Oh! if he who stirred the people with his war-cry a hundred years ago, could come back now, and standing where he stood then, gaze upon the ruins you have made, do you not think he would lift his hand to Heaven once more, praying, “If this is liberty, oh, give me death!”

A BOHEMIAN.

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But the time came when she wished to undertake the more laborious and trying duties of a hospital-nurse. Her friends, with hardly an exception, united to oppose this plan, knowing well that her delicate frame and excitable temperament were ill adapted to bear the hardships of such a situation. Other arguments were also thrown into the scale by anxious relatives; but her whole soul was fixed on the work; she never faltered for a moment; and even now, when the worst fears of those friends have been realized,—even now, they cannot but feel that the sacrifice, though it might have been a mistaken one, and

partaking too much of her natural enthusiasm, was a sincere offering, and was accepted by God, and answered by that heavenly fire which alone could give life and efficacy to the work.

In April, 1862, Miss Breckinridge left home for the West; on her way remaining some weeks in Baltimore, where she commenced her hospital service. Her letters from that place show the great interest which she felt in the work, and in the individual cases which were committed to her care. She left Baltimore, carrying with her the seeds of measles, which she had contracted in the hospital, and which developed themselves on her journey, so that she was quite ill when she arrived at the house of her cousin, in Lexington, Kentucky. It was some weeks before she was able to resume her work in the hospitals of that place. In the beginning of July her letters revert to the subject which was so near her heart, and show that she had again become actively engaged.

But deeper and nearer experiences of the war were before her. Toward the middle of July, the guerrillas, under John Morgan, reached the neighborhood of Lexington in the course of a wild raid, made into Kentucky, spreading con-

sternation among the inhabitants wherever they came.

After this raid was over and Morgan was driven back, there followed some weeks of comparative quiet, though not without constant rumors and threats of impending danger. About the first of September, these threats were put in execution by an invasion of the rebel army, under General Kirby Smith, who, for about six weeks, held possession of Lexington and the neighborhood. We will again use her own narrative, written soon after:

The Rebels in Kentucky.—An Experience of Six Weeks among the Soldiers of Gens. Kirby Smith, and Bragg.

Nov. 15, 1862.

THE history of the late invasion of Kentucky was written at the time in telegraphic dispatches and the reports of Generals, but there were a hundred incidents full of interest connected with it which will never be known unless they are related by some one who lived in the midst of them and knew of them as they occurred. Perhaps such a history may be read with interest.

It was on Tuesday, the 2d of September, that KIRBY SMITH and his body-guard rode into Lexington and took formal possession of the town without the firing of a gun. "Lor, massa!" said one of their negro ser-

vants to an officer, "Lor, massa! dis de easiest took town we got yet!" It had evidently been a most agreeable surprise to them that our troops had not made a stand there. Worn out with the hardships of their terrible march from Virginia, hungry and naked, they had fought at Richmond with all the desperation of men who knew that defeat was utter destruction, and now, out of ammunition and out of heart, they looked forward to another struggle for the possession of Lexington.

The condition they were in was never known till long after, or it might have altered affairs entirely, but with the knowledge we had then, the evacuation of the town was considered a military necessity. We had no troops but the new recruits who had just been defeated at Richmond, not from want of bravery, but of discipline and knowledge, and were no match for the ragged veterans of Kirby Smith. Most of them had been only a fortnight in the service, and knew so little of military terms that when ordered on the battle-field to "fire by platoons," the greater part of both officers and men did not know what was meant. Almost the only regiment there which had seen service, the Eighteenth Kentucky, had fought with a bravery and determination which called forth the praise of Kirby Smith himself, and had come out of the battle with but 300 men; and so, for the present, Lexington was given up quietly to the rebels. To them it was like reaching the promised land. Never, perhaps, since the days of the retreat from Moscow, was there such a terrible march as that one through Big Creek Gap to the interior of Kentucky. They never liked to talk of it, and seemed to look upon it as a time

of suffering to be forgotten as soon as possible. Many of them said they would rather die than go back the way they came; and by little and little we drew from them how they had been bushwhacked by the loyal mountain men from the moment they entered the State; how, for fifteen miles, at one time, the crack of the rifles had never ceased, and their comrades had dropped one by one at their sides, shot by invisible hands. Sometimes they would stop for a few moments to hang some of these poor mountain men, who were trying, "not wisely, but too well," to keep out the invaders, and then pass on again, hardly stopping day or night, for fear we might have time to prepare for them before they got here. Their only food for days and days was the green corn they pulled as they passed through the country, and eat raw as they marched along. Kirby Smith himself had nothing better for many days. Their clothing was ragged and dirty, their feet bare, and their heads uncovered. So wretched was their condition, that, on the battle-field at Richmond, they wrangled over the bodies of our dead and wounded, each one angrily claiming that "those were his shoes," and "that was his hat," and in some cases entirely stripping our poor fellows, and leaving them wrapped in blankets to take care of themselves.

As soon as possible after his entrance into the town, Gen. Smith issued a proclamation in the usual conciliatory and even pathetic style. He had come to deliver us from bondage; would we not receive him as our friend? and promising (which we regarded as much more to the point) to respect the property and persons of private citizens. Their policy evidently was to make

friends, to gain over the people and the State by good treatment and plausible words; and for a day or two it had its effect. People who had expected to be imprisoned, if not killed outright, were amazed at such behavior; others who had never been very staunch or loyal, were dazzled by what seemed the entire conquest of the State, and young men of States' rights proclivities rushed in crowds to the recruiting office. It was all a delusion and a dream. The reins tightened in proportion to the distance and the numbers of the great Union army gathering at Louisville and Cincinnati, and as they felt their hold on the State relaxing, they determined to make as much as possible out of their campaign in Kentucky and were restrained at last only by fears of retaliation.

The welcome which greeted Kirby Smith and his army as he entered Lexington, was mistaken by him for an expression of the town itself. Never was a poor man more deceived. It was a demonstration made by secessionists from all the neighboring counties, who had flocked in for the very purpose, no doubt, of creating such an impression. Lexington is, for the most part, a loyal town, and so Kirby Smith found, to his chagrin, a few days afterward. Flushed with his success, he issued an order for the observance of Jeff. Davis's Thanksgiving Day, and notified the different clergymen that their churches must be opened. Perplexity sat upon reverend faces, and at last the day came. But two churches were opened, and when the hour for service arrived in one of them, a secretly delighted pastor sat gazing at empty pews, and in the other a dismayed congregation sat gazing at an empty pulpit. At last

they sent for Gen. Smith himself. He came and saw the position at once. The church was Presbyterian, but, nothing daunted, he drew his prayer-book from his pocket, read the Episcopal service, and, in his agitation perhaps, read it all wrong, dismissed his little flock of goats, and went home a sadder and a wiser man. At that very time, a train of ambulances, bringing our sick and wounded from Richmond, was leaving town on its way to Cincinnati. It was a sight to stir every loyal heart; and so the Union people thronged round them to cheer them up with pleasant, hopeful words, to bid them God speed, and last, but not least, to fill their haversacks and canteens. We went, thinking it possible we might be ordered off by the guard, but they only stood off, scowling and wondering.

“Good-by,” said the poor fellows from the ambulances, “we’re coming back as soon as ever we get well.”

“Yes, yes,” we whispered, for there were spies all round us, “and every one of you bring a regiment with you.”

Kirby Smith saw it all, and, disappointed, mortified, and astonished at his day’s adventures, confessed that night, that after the welcome which had greeted him, he was not prepared for such a demonstration over Union soldiers, and such an utter lack of interest in Jeff. Davis’s Thanksgiving Day. He found it was not Lexington that had welcomed him.

“Where does Gen. Smith preach this morning?” said a lovely Union lady to the sentinel at headquarters the next Sunday.

“You are mistaken, ma’am,” replied the obtuse sentinel; “Gen. Smith *isn't* a preacher at all.”

Soon after their arrival, Confederate scrip began to make its way into the stores. A proclamation came out, ordering it to be taken, and taken at par. If a merchant refused it, his goods were seized and the price fixed by those who took them. One or two stores, owned by obnoxious Union men, were taken possession of and a guard placed at the door, and all were forced to open their stores for a certain number of hours. The most provoking thing was their own apparent contempt for the scrip. When asked exorbitant prices for anything (as it came to be the result, of course, that prices became fabulous), they never seemed surprised, and threw their money about “as if it was brown paper,” said some one. Prominent secessionists refused to receive it, and some officers in the army took it as seldom as possible, giving in one instance as an excuse, “that they wanted greenbacks as a *curiosity!*”

It will not do, however, in telling these things, to let it be supposed that Kirby Smith was answerable directly for all that happened. After John Morgan's arrival, a few days afterward, many, or most of the outrages were committed by his men. Horse-stealing was their favorite amusement, and this Gen. Smith exerted himself to put a stop to. Report said that they quarreled often and sharply about it—Gen. Smith wishing to restrain the men, and Morgan determined to allow them every license. We were startled one morning by the sudden and violent ringing of all the fire-bells in town. Hearing of different threats that had been made to burn the town, we supposed it must be that. It



turned out to be a welcome to John Morgan and his men. A very significant sound to greet him with. They rode through the town in triumph, the same wild, ill-looking set who had become familiar to us at the time of their first raid, 1500 of them, without uniform, dirty, and desperate looking, an unwelcome sight to Union people, or to any lover of law and order. Besides their secession colors, they carried a number of smaller flags. The Texan Rangers had their own—a black cross and one white star upon a crimson ground; others had blue flags with an egg-shaped figure, or a crescent and cluster of stars, and about which they were so unwilling to be questioned that we concluded that they were secret signs of the “Golden Circle.” It was a day of triumph for them, remembering how they had been foiled in their last attempt upon the town. “This is the town, boys,” said one of their captains, mockingly, to his men, “this is the town they would rather die than surrender.” From that time, so far as all feeling of safety or protection went, we might as well have lived among the Camanches. The carelessness and recklessness, and utter disregard of right that grew worse from day to day, might land us anywhere. It was like living on a magazine of powder.

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About the first of November, when Lexington was again freed from this rebel invasion and from its accompanying alarms, Miss Breckinridge, in

pursuance of her original plan, left Kentucky to spend the winter in St. Louis, with her brother, Judge Breckinridge, whose house she considered as her Western home. Immediately on her arrival, she commenced her visits at the hospitals in that city and its neighborhood. After two days spent at Jefferson Barracks, she writes:

“I shall never be satisfied till I get right into a hospital, to live till the war is over. If you are constantly with the men, you have hundreds of opportunities and moments of influence in which you can gain their attention and their hearts, and do more good than in any missionary field.”

But the most trying work of the winter, and which left its mark most ineffaceably on her frail constitution, was that which she performed on the hospital boats which were sent down the Mississippi to bring up the sick and wounded from the posts below. Two excursions of this kind she made in company with a few other ladies from St. Louis; the two trips occupying about two months, and affording every variety of pleasurable and painful experience. These boats went down the river either empty or carrying companies of soldiers to rejoin their regiments; and, as they left home with fresh supplies and in

comparatively good order, the first experiences were not so trying. But, when returning, every corner filled with the sick and dying, from the malarious swamps of the White River, and Young's Point, and even the cabin floor and deck covered with these emaciated and fever-stricken men, who must be tended and ministered to in that position, it can easily be imagined, that, with the fatigues of such nursing, with the exposure to chilly and miasmatic air, which the crowded state of the boat rendered necessary, and with the injurious diet, when everything salutary seemed to be needed by the sick and suffering, very few could come unscathed out of such an ordeal. And few did thus come. Several were sick, or returned to be sick at home, and Miss Breckinridge congratulated herself that she was among the few who were able to hold out to the end and perform her necessary duties. After her return to St. Louis, she wrote, for the gratification of her own friends, as well as to stimulate the friends of the soldiers, an account of her experiences on the river, from which we will make some selections. These records of the war, however informal, will increase in interest as the Great Rebellion re-

cedes from the bloody foreground to its place on the page of history.

Adventures on a Hospital Boat on the Mississippi.

No. 1.

St. Louis, Feb. 4, 1863.

DEAR ——— :

I LITTLE thought when I wrote to you a month ago what a strange adventurous life the New Year would bring to me ; that I should go down to the borders of Dixie, and then join the fleet bound for White River, and go up with it into the very heart of Arkansas, seeing more of the war, and appreciating the hardship and danger of a soldier's life from experience. It all begins to look dreamy to me already, and if I wait any longer to write you the history of those four weeks I am afraid it will float away from me entirely, like a great shadowy island, and be lost in the ocean of the past.

It was on Monday evening, January 4th, that we left St. Louis, with our boxes of hospital stores directed to "Vicksburg, Mississippi," which, in the plenitude of our faith in Sherman and the gunboats, we did not doubt was already in our hands. It was not till we left Cairo the next afternoon that the danger and excitement of our journey began to impress us. We met steamboats coming up with saucy little cannon putting their noses out at the sides of the engine, and with their pilot-houses protected by mattresses and sheets of iron, both of which were suggestive of guerrillas, masked batteries, and other ugly things. We passed the battle-field at

Belmont in the gray of the evening, a sombre, desolate place at best, and desolate indeed when we recalled all that had happened there. It was night when we passed under the shadow of the frowning cliff at Columbus, and so dark that if Bishop Polk's chain and torpedoes had been there we should have been wrecked assuredly. The next day our acquaintance with guerrillas began. They were very polite, they urged us in every possible way to land, but our captain had been up and down many times, had been fired into once, and knowing that their signals were counterfeit, shook his head with a funny smile and said, "I know too much to land here, old fellows." They did not fire at us, and we passed on to Fort Pillow. I wish you could have seen it. It is the most magnificent position for a fort, commanding the whole sweep of the river up and down for miles, and why any force holding it should ever surrender seems a wonder. The water-battery, with its piles of sand bags, so matted together now they look like white stone work, is still there, the soldiers' tents crowning the bluff above it, and long before we reached the landing a stream of blue-coats began to pour down the steep road cut on the hill-side, to meet us and hear the news from Vicksburg, which we could not tell ourselves. All along below here the guerrillas are getting perfectly rampant; burning cotton, and decoying unwary captains ashore, and then seizing and destroying their boats and freight, are favorite pastimes with these playful creatures. At a little town above Memphis we put off some country merchants who had been up to St. Louis for goods; they were professedly loyal men, and the first news they

heard as they went ashore was that a band of guerrillas were then ravaging the country seven miles back, burning cotton and conscripting every man they could find. Poor people, I did feel sorry for them. They looked after us with despairing eyes, and the last I saw of them they were hovering round their trunks and boxes, afraid to go, and more afraid to stay.

Memphis is a perfect hot-bed of secessionists—and they are only smothered, not extinguished. The city is very handsomely laid out, and finely built up, and in the square is a statue of Jackson. Some morbid rebel has taken a chisel and almost scratched out the words "Federal Union" from the inscription at its base. I only wish Old Hickory had come to life, and caught him doing it. To give you an idea of the audacity of these guerrillas; while we lay at Memphis that afternoon, in broad daylight, a party of six dressed in our uniform went on board a government boat lying just across the river, and asked to be taken as passengers six miles up the river, which was granted; but they had no sooner left the shore than they drew their pistols, overpowered the crew, and made them go up eighteen miles to meet another government boat coming down loaded with stores, tied the boats together and burned them, setting the crew of each adrift in their own yawl, and nobody knew it till they reached Memphis, two hours later. Being able to hear nothing of the wounded, we pushed on to Helena, ninety miles below, and here dangers thickened. We saw the guerrillas burning cotton with our own eyes along the shore, we saw their little skiffs hid away among the bushes on the shore, and just before we got to Helena, had a most narrow escape

from their clutches. A signal to land on the river was in ordinary times never disregarded, as the *way* business of freight and passengers was the chief profit often of the trip, and it seems hard for pilots and captains always to be on their guard against a decoy. At this landing the signal was given all as it should be (they had counterfeited the new signal), and we were just rounding to, when, with a sudden jerk, the boat swung round into the stream again. The mistake was discovered in time by a government officer on board, and we escaped an ambush. Just think: we might have been prisoners in Mississippi now, but God meant better things for us than that. I was amazed to find that quite a force is constantly hovering in the rear of Helena. Hardly a week passes that there is not a skirmish, and our pickets are constantly "gobbled up," as the expression is here—which means captured and paroled, though sometimes they never return any more. Just before we reached Helena a picket-guard of twenty-six were captured by a band who had our uniform on, and who came behind them in the direction of our own camps and so surprised them. Strangely enough, when one of our gunboats captured a rebel mail on the White River, a letter was given to me, as my share of the spoils, containing a minute account of how "Capt. Giddings" and his men had managed the affair, and returned safe to their camp after having paroled their prisoners. Still more strangely, on our hospital boat coming up, who should be on their way to St. Louis but these same paroled men, about twenty of them. I sent them word that I had a letter telling how they were taken, and if they had any curiosity to know I

would read it to them. It was quite funny to watch their astonished faces, and to see their surprise and amusement as I read the history of their own adventures from rebel authority ! You never saw so wretched a place as Helena ; low, damp, and enveloped in a continual fog, the rain poured down the whole time we were there, and the camps stretching for miles up and down the river looked like the constant and abiding dwelling-place of fever and ague, and it is without doubt a most sickly place. Why it should ever have been chosen for a military post, and why it is held still, though known and proved to be a most unhealthy place, nobody seems able or willing to tell. The mud is enough to frighten anybody who does not wear cavalry boots, and the soldiers, who with all their hardships and privations have a joke for everything, tell grave stories of mules and wagons being lost forever in the streets of Helena, two pointed *ears* being the self-erected monuments to tell where each mule is buried. I saw myself, while we were making the tour of the town, a great mud-hole, with a sign-board on a pole at its edge. Three significant words were written on it, "*This is bottomless.*" But oh ! the contrabands, my heart did ache for them. Such wretched, uncared for, sad-looking creatures I never saw. Just at the top of the levee there were two groups waiting to be taken back to Mississippi again. A poor dejected man stood in the midst of one group (women and children, boxes and bags in a heap all round), holding an old horse by a bridle.

"Well, Uncle," I said, "how do you like being free?"



“ I haint seen no freedom yet, missis, I’sc a gwine home agin !”

They come in such swarms that it is impossible to do anything for them, unless benevolent people take the thing into their hands. They have a little settlement in one end of the town, and the government furnishes them rations, but they cannot all get work, even if they were all able and willing to do it (which many are not); then they get sick from exposure, and now the small-pox is making terrible havoc among them. They have a hospital of their own, and one of our Union Aid ladies had gone down to superintend it, and get it into some order, but it seems as if there was nothing before them but suffering for many a long day to come, and that sad, sad truth came back to me so often as I went about among them, that no people ever gained their freedom without a baptism of fire. The soldiers seem to have a latent notion that the contrabands were in the beginning the cause of the war, and feel a little spiteful toward them accordingly, forgetting that they, poor souls, are innocent. It was Saturday morning that we left Helena for the White River, at the mouth of which, we had heard, lay the boat with the wounded from Vicksburg; our yellow flag, which we had made that morning, appealing silently to the hearts of the guerrillas; but we had gone only a few miles before we met Gen. Gorman coming up, who convinced us that we were no longer independent civilians, but enlisted soldiers, under military rule. He told us we were not safe without an escort, and that we must turn round and go up to Helena again, which we did in the meekest manner, hauling down our yellow flag, and following humbly in the

rear. At Helena our plans were all changed. Gen. Gorman was about to start on his White River expedition, and expecting to have severe fighting himself, wanted us to go with his fleet. The City of Memphis, with the wounded from Vicksburg, came up that very day, and finding that they had been well cared for, and were all to be discharged at the Memphis hospitals, we took a vote, and were unanimous for White River. That day and the next was a scene of the wildest confusion. The levee was alive with troops, and the river with boats. The idea of leaving Helena, and of "getting a chance at a fight," as they said, seemed to set the soldiers wild. One long, loud hurrah seemed to shake the very air, and as one boat after another was loaded and passed over to the other side to wait for the flag-ship to join them and give the signal for starting, the shout was taken up by the camps all along the river, and died away among the woods, only to come surging back again the next moment louder than ever. As we leaned over the guards, watching the thronging crowds on the levee, who were waiting to be ordered on their boats, and listening to their cheerful talk and funny jokes, checked every now and then by a dry hacking cough, or a yawn that ended in something that wanted to be a sigh, and watching one group in particular who were singing the "red, white, and blue" most lustily, one man holding the lantern, which shone full in their faces, and threw the whole thing out in bold relief; just then, while we were watching them, the word of command was given, they sprang to their feet, fell into line, and marched down toward our boat. Yes, they were coming on board, and before we knew it (we were so taken

by surprise, and so busy watching them walking up the plank), they had come up the steps and were all around us, and, as I turned to see what it was, a blue cape flapped in my face, a musket rapped me on the head, and two soldiers, who were about to walk over me, drew back as much bewildered as I was, and I beat a hasty retreat into the cabin. We did not know then how many pleasant hours we should spend among them, how sadly we should bid them good-by, or how often we should look back and wonder what the fortunes of war had brought to them.

M. E. B.

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### Adventures on a Hospital Boat on the Mississippi.

#### No. II.

St. Louis, Feb. 4, 1863.

It was on Sunday evening,—alas! that this should be the day so often chosen for starting,—that the fleet, all loaded and ready, twenty-nine vessels in all, lay waiting for the flag-ship to give the signal for starting, and at last it came, long and shrill, and one by one we dropped down the river and joined the procession over which the red and green lights of each floated like so many stars, as far as we could see in the distance, and morning found us all at rest again at the mouth of White River, a narrow little stream that crept out from behind a sharp bend between two thickets of cotton-wood, as if it was ashamed of something it had been doing.

“Why don’t we go on?” said the raw recruit.

“Waiting for orders,” said the old soldier, with a compassionate smile, as if he remembered the time when he wondered and asked questions too.

“Are you ready, for I am?” shrieked the flag-ship at last.

“Yes! yes! yes! yes!” the answer came, and was carried back from boat to boat, and as the last shrill whistle came faintly from far up the shore the procession took up its march. At the mouth of the river two stately ships lay at anchor, like a royal couple waiting to receive their court. Slowly and gracefully our transports, one by one, glided past them, turned, advanced again, it almost seemed as if they courtesied, and then swept round the bend, and out of sight into White River. It was a scene never to be forgotten. Now our tribulations began. A wonder for crookedness is this little river, and so narrow that some of our larger boats were in danger of blockading the stream permanently, while trying to get round the sharp bends. At first it was terrific to feel the stern crushing in among the trees, and hear the slight wood-work round the guards snapping and tearing as some overhanging bough swept along. Some of us made a rapid exit from one of the state-rooms as a great cypress branch came poking its head almost into the door, and when we tied up for the night, every boat had some disaster to tell of or some dreadful wound to show. One had lost a piece of the wheel-house, a branch had swept a dozen muskets and knapsacks from the deck of another, and from a third fourteen poor horses had fallen through a hole torn out of the lower deck. Our boat was comparatively small, so that we did not share the anxiety of the larger ones.

It was soon after we got into the river that an order was given to load muskets, and a guard was stationed on the roof; and it was a place fit for all kinds of desperate deeds. A desolate, wilderness-looking country, no signs of life for miles and miles together, the low, swampy shore covered with cypress trees and wild cane brakes, and the long tangled vines, like funeral draping, fringing the trees and hanging in a trailing mass on the ground. A hundred guerrillas and a dozen batteries might have been hidden in it, and it was well to be prepared. Occasionally, as we went on, a single house might be seen set up on four high legs, as if it wished to be prepared to walk away at a moment's notice. The Spring floods are equal to an Egyptian overflow, and the high water, twelve feet higher than the surface, looks like a misty cloud floating along the shore. As it subsides, it leaves the country covered with a rank vegetation, and full of deadly vapors. The water is full of fever, and the country almost uninhabitable. Even now the water is almost poisonous to those who take it without care. On our boat alone half the soldiers were sick (some never recovered) from the effects of the water. It has a peculiar color, as if chalk had been mixed with it, and is very cold; to me the pleasantest water I have ever tasted.

I must not forget to tell you about our prayer meetings. There were many religious men among the soldiers, and twice on Sunday, and three times in the week we had little gatherings that reminded us all of home. A way off there in that wild deserted country we sang the same hymns that you were all singing at home, and even among the soldiers, to whom people generally give

little credit for religious principle, we found a little church. I cannot tell you how it stirred and thrilled me, and how I longed for you all to see the crowded cabin, and hear the woods along shore ringing with the notes of the dear old hymns I have sung in Princeton so often, as the men sat on the guards singing together hour after hour; and when it was pleasant we went out and sang with them. I don't believe the old Arkansas woods ever heard of a prayer-meeting or a hymn before. It was not till the third night,—the other two we spent tied up along the shore, protected by a strong picket force,—that we reached St. Charles; and here we had expected to find troops to dispute our progress; the little gunboat which protected our advance had been passing up and down, scouting, trying to draw any hidden fire there was, and greeted with shouts and hurrahs on every side. We knew how much our own safety depended upon her, and we had just heard that it was to the gunboats we owed the victory at Arkansas Post. No enemy was to be found at St. Charles. The intrenchments were all deserted and the town almost empty. A regiment was landed, and a chain of pickets thrown out, and right at the spot where our poor drowning men were murdered as they were clinging to the sides of the gunboat, just where the Mound City lay, we too lay all night. How little I thought then that I should ever see the place. The next morning we went on to Clarendon cautiously, for at any moment we might meet an enemy, but here again the town had been left for our occupation. The cavalry, which left Helena when we did, had come across and were already in possession. They had taken prisoners, and had several

skirmishes by the way, and had stories to tell of some narrow escapes and hard marches. It did not take long for our soldiers to scour the town, and capture every house. A party would rush in, and finding nobody, up stairs they would go and in a moment hang out a blue blanket, a token of victory. Many a poor chicken and pig fell an unwilling victim, and when we left for Duvall's Bluff next morning there was little that was eatable left in the town. Above Clarendon the river is perfectly bewildering in its windings and convolutions. Boats that we had seen in front of us a moment before, appear suddenly away back among the trees behind us. It is a perfect game of hide and seek. We turn a sharp bend and two of our fleet are just in front of us, but in a moment they are gone out of sight behind the next point of land, and so we chase them all day long, just to see them sweep around one bend as we come in sight around the other. Wild geese and ducks and plenty of crane rise in flocks as we come suddenly upon them, but except where the bluff strikes the river suddenly, as at St. Charles, no sign of life or human habitation appears for miles together. It was on Friday, the 16th of January, that we came cautiously and expectantly upon Duvall's Bluff. It was here that there was sure to be a strong force, it was here we hoped to retake the Blue Wing, which had come up just a day in advance of us all the way, and here was the railroad connecting with Little Rock and only fifty miles from it, but there was nothing to dispute our landing. On the shore, and just ready to be carried off, were two large siege guns, the ropes were round them, and the platform cars standing by all ready to receive them, but they had gone, leaving it all.

Further search brought to light two hundred muskets hid in a barn, and some sick rebels in a little hut on the hill. A contraband said that the cars were to come in at midnight to carry all away, so the artillery was posted on a hill commanding the track for miles, and we all sat up to wait for the train,—not that we expected any friends,—but they had had warning no doubt, and we heard nothing of them. The fortifications here are as commanding as they are at Fort Pillow, and if the two siege guns had been mounted we should have found it hard work to come within many miles of them. We went out the next morning to look at the spoils we had taken, and carried some books and tracts for the soldiers, and some little comforts for our sick prisoners on the hill. It was the wretchedest little hovel I ever saw. It had no windows; and as I stood in the doorway (the bright snow had blinded my eyes so that I could see nothing) I thought it looked as much like the picture of a pirate's cave as anything I ever saw. It was pitch dark, except the flickering fire-light. The sick men were crouched up by the fire, and a group of soldiers sat around on boxes and on the bed, the fitful blaze giving them a most sinister look. The sick men were very glad to see us, and the soldiers fixed seats for us, and we sat and listened to the old story. How they had been Union from the first, how they were “*drug*” in and forced in, and how charmed they were to be taken. I confess I am suspicious of these excessively loyal prisoners, and the sequel does not always go to confirm their stories. Of all benighted creatures I think one of these poor wretches did exceed anything I ever knew. Mrs. C. had brought an apple with her, and



gave it to him. She told him he must roast it, and as I had a long string in my pocket I tied it to the stem, and then fastened the other end to a nail in the mantle-piece, and it twirled and sputtered most beautifully right over the coals.

“La!” said he, “I never seed a roast apple before!”

Mrs. C. then said, “Would you like a lemon?”

“I can’t say, ma’am,” he answered, “I don’t know what that is.”

She handed it to him, and he proceeded to *smell* it in a feeble manner, and at last asked her what it was good for! “To make a drink,” she said, and I am satisfied that as soon as we were gone he boiled it. All the spoils, guns, muskets, and prisoners, were taken on board the fleet, and on Saturday we heard that as soon as the gunboat returned from up the river we were to go back to Helena again. The King of France is not the only man who has had to march “down the hill again,” without accomplishing anything. It was not till Monday morning that we left Duvall’s Bluff, and our passage down was rapid compared with our slow rate of speed going up. The current is very swift, and it was with difficulty the boat was kept from being driven ashore against the sharp bends, and we were all dilapidated enough when we got out into the great broad Mississippi again. We stopped again at Clarendon, still leaving a force of cavalry there. At St. Charles, which we left to its desolation, the town was all destroyed but one Union house, and the intrenchments and barracks made a blaze which lighted the sky all through the night. We had many sick men on board, and plenty to keep us busy all the time, but we were not

sorry to see the broad waters of the Mississippi stretching out before us again, and to know that we were turning homeward once more. The saddest, indeed the only sad occurrence of the whole journey happened just after we left the mouth of the White River again. We stopped for wood, and the men imprudently scattered all through the forest. The signal for starting was given, the men all came on board again, and we went on for a mile or two before it was found out that eleven men were missing. We returned at once—a squad of men under their captain were marched ashore, and were going up to the town when three of their lost comrades came rushing through the bushes, overjoyed to see us all again. The others have never been heard of, and as mounted guerrillas were seen by those who returned, and revolver shots and shooting were heard in the distance, they were probably overpowered and taken prisoners. I will not think that they have been killed; they were some of the pleasantest of all the company. The captain would have gone on searching for them, but it was thought an ambush had been prepared to decoy them all into the bushes, and so we went off sorrowfully enough. At Helena, where it was raining again, we left our soldier friends. Their regiment, the twenty-ninth Wisconsin, was not to go to Vicksburg, and they went into camp again. We met Grant's army going down, and found another excitement at Helena, where, with troops and transports, all was life and stir. But here for us the scene changes. We were transferred to the hospital boats coming up with the sick, and Mrs. C. and myself were detailed to take charge of the smallest, on which were one hundred and sixty patients,

and of the week we spent among the sick and dying there, I will tell you when I have time to write again.

Yours, etc.,

M. E. B.

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From the PRINCETON STANDARD.

### Adventures on a Hospital Boat on the Mississippi.

#### NO. III.

St. Louis, Feb. 4, 1863.

It was on Sunday morning, the 25th of January, that Mrs. C. and I went on board the hospital boat which had received its sad freight the day before, and was to leave at once for St. Louis, and it would be impossible to describe the scene which presented itself to me as I stood in the door of the cabin. Lying on the floor with nothing under them but a tarpaulin and their blankets, were crowded fifty men, many of them with death written on their faces; and looking through the half-open doors of the state-rooms we saw that they contained as many more. Young, boyish faces, old and thin from suffering, great restless eyes that were fixed on nothing, incoherent ravings of those who were wild with fever, and hollow coughs on every side,—this, and much more that I do not want to recall, was our welcome to our new work; but as we passed between the two long rows, back to our own cabin, pleasant smiles came to the lips of some, others looked after us wonderingly, and one poor boy whispered, “Oh, but it is good

to see the ladies come in!" I took one long look into Mrs. C.'s eyes to see how much strength and courage was hidden in them. We asked each other, not in words, but in those fine electric thrills by which one soul questions another, "Can we bring strength and hope and comfort to these poor suffering men?" and the answer was, "Yes, by God's help we will." The first thing was to give them something like a comfortable bed, and Sunday though it was, we went to work to run up our sheets into bed-sacks. Every man that had strength to stagger was pressed into the service, and by night most of them had something softer than a tarpaulin to sleep on. "Oh, I am so comfortable now!" some of them said: "I think I can sleep to-night," one little fellow exclaimed half-laughing with pleasure; and a little ray of light seemed already to have penetrated the darkness. The next thing was to provide something that sick people could eat, for coffee and bread was poor food for most of them. We had two little stoves, one in the cabin and one in the chambermaid's room, and here, the whole time we were on board, we had to do the cooking for one hundred men, for the stove intended for it was down on the boiler deck, and quite out of our reach. Twenty times that day I fully made up my mind to cry with vexation, and twenty times that day I laughed instead; and surely a "kettle" of tea was never made under so many difficulties as the one I made that morning. It was the same little kettle I had in all my wanderings, and I had an affection for it. Many a cup of tea had been made in it on the White River, and now somebody had been borrowing it down stairs and had lost the lid. "Where is the lid of my kettle?"

I asked; "the water will not boil." A group of soldiers stood round ready to help. One went for the kettle lid, one for some bread to make toast, another was dispatched for a knife, and a fourth for a fork—all were good natured and anxious to help, but they had not learned "to make bricks without straw." The kettle lid was not to be found, the water simmered and sang at its leisure, and when I asked for the poker I could get nothing but an old bayonet, and all the time, through the half-open door behind me, I heard the poor hungry fellows asking the nurses, "where is that tea the lady promised me?" or, "when will my toast come?" But there must be an end to all things, and when I carried them their tea and toast, and heard them pronounce it "plaguey good," and "awful nice," it was more than a recompense for all the worry. One great trouble was the intense cold. We could not keep life in some of the poor emaciated frames. "Oh dear! I shall freeze to death!" one poor little fellow groaned as I passed him. Blankets seemed to have no effect upon them, and at last we had to keep canteens filled with boiling water at their feet. Down on the boiler deck were those who were least sick, and with so much to fill our hands up stairs, we had no time but for an occasional visit down there, to see that they were suffering for nothing.

We had some serious cases of erysipelas, and at one time it caused us great uneasiness by spreading rapidly among those who were already weakened from sickness; but the surgeons had them all removed to state-rooms and kept by themselves, and there the infection stopped. Most of the cases were typhoid fever, the worst form I have ever seen. I had one patient, a poor fellow, who

was the most patient sufferer I ever saw. He was delirious for many days, and one day as I leaned over him he looked up at me as if he had seen me for the first time. "Who are you?" he asked, "I don't know you;" and though he seemed satisfied when I told him I had come to take care of him, to lie quietly, he still followed me with his large bright eyes. The next day Mrs. C. did several little things for him, and had charge of my wards too, as I was busy cooking in the cabin. That night I heard him call one of the nurses to him and ask, "Who is that *other* old woman that has been around to-day?" Alas, for Mrs. C. and myself! our dreams of youth and beauty were rudely dispelled. Think of it! To be called "old women." We had many a laugh over it. The day before his death he was mercifully restored to consciousness, dictated a letter to his wife, and though he longed to see "some one from home," seemed willing to die. He had been a Christian for many years. Near him lay a poor boy, about whom from the first I had been very anxious. He drooped and faded from day to day before my eyes. Nothing but constant stimulant seemed to keep him alive, and at last I summoned courage to tell him—oh, how hard it was!—that he could not live many hours. "Are you willing to die?" I asked him. He closed his eyes, and was silent a moment, then came that passionate exclamation which I have heard so often, "My mother, oh! my mother!" and to the last, though I believe God gave him strength to trust in Christ, and willingness to die, he longed for his mother. I had to leave him, and not long after he sent for me to come, that he was dying, and wanted me to sing for him. He

prayed for himself in the most touching words; he confessed that he had been a wicked boy, and then with one last message for that dear mother, turned his face to the pillow and died; and so, one by one, we saw them pass away, and all the little keepsakes and treasures they had loved and kept about them, laid away to be sent home to those they should never see again. Oh! it was heart-breaking to see that.

Seventeen died on the way to St. Louis, not a large number to those who saw how many dying men were brought upon the boat; but on the other hand, it was a happy thing to see many of those who seemed so wretched at first, reviving gradually under a little care and nursing. Some of them began to show signs of returning health, in an appetite which required the strictest watching, and not a little scolding, to keep it in check. One day we had eggs for dinner for all who could eat them; but there seemed to be a greater number distributed than there were men to eat them, though we watched very closely as we thought, that none should be helped more than once. The mystery was explained at last. A little hungry-eyed fellow, who had declared he could eat a dozen, raised himself in bed, and shouted to me, "I say, ma'am, I know what them fellows does, they eats one egg lying down, and then gets up and goes and sits by the stove and gets another." I expressed great horror and grief at such perfidy, and said, "You would not do so, would you?" "Oh! yes, ma'am," he answered, "I would do most anything to get another."

The morning we got to Cairo, Mrs. C. and I went on shore very early to buy some things they were in

need of, and left them to depend on the men nurses for breakfast. "What had you for breakfast?" we asked a convalescent on our return. "Oh! the old fare, coffee and bread." "Very well," we told him. "You shall have a good dinner; there will be eggs for all to-day." He seemed to think it was a joke, but finding we were really in earnest, he clapped his hands and chuckled, "Bully for you!" as strong an expression of approbation as he could use probably.

I must not forget to tell you an adventure we had coming up. We were all sitting quietly round the stove resting, the sick men all quiet for the night, when a cannon fired from the shore made us all start to our feet. It seemed to have been fired directly at the boat. Going out on the guards, we found we were, sure enough, rounding to in obedience to the signal, and we could see in the moonlight a tent and about thirty men on shore. It was not a place where we had any troops, it must be the rebels, and we remembered with not much pleasure that a few miles below we had been signaled from the woods by what we supposed were guerrillas, and these it might be were some more of them. The minutes that passed while we were coming to shore seemed ages, and we waited breathless to know our fate. I have half a mind to stop here, as novel writers do, and tell you the result next time; however, it turned out all right. It was the other side of Island No. 10 (we thought it was the Tennessee shore), and it was our own men. They stopped every vessel, firing a blank cartridge across the bow, as some suspicious boats were about, probably. It was Friday night (we left Helena on Sunday) when we reached the barracks,



twelve miles from here (St. Louis), where we were to discharge our sick, but we did not send them ashore till the morning. We had learned to feel at home among them, and it was hard to bid them all good-by. We had seen many sad hours together on that wretched, comfortless boat, so utterly without all that was convenient and comfortable, so miserably dirty, so worn out and tumbling to pieces, but it had not made us love them less (that would not be nature), that we had suffered for them and with them, and so, when the parting came, there were touching scenes. They thought at first that we were to be with them and take care of them in the hospital, and seemed to feel as if it would not be like home without us; but we promised to see them soon, and so, some carried down on stretchers, and some led by those who were stronger, and some trying to totter alone, they vanished up the hill and into the cheerful pleasant buildings where I knew they would find friends and tender care. Nothing remained to remind us of what had been, but four white shapes, lying silent on the deck, four of our boys who had died the day before and whom we were taking to be buried in St. Louis. In a few moments, too, the cabin was all made a strange place to us, the beds all thrown upon the shore to be emptied and washed, the tarpaulins taken up, the straw thrown overboard. It hurt me to see it, so we took our bonnets and went up on the hurricane deck, to take a last look at the place where we had left our old friends. It was a soft spring-like morning, and from the shore, as the boat passed out with the stream again, came the lowing of the cows. I don't know what subtle association brought Princeton to my mind like a flash. I

seemed to look back to that dear old town as if it were a picture spread before me. All the happy years I had spent there rose up as if they were yesterday only. It needed only this to break my heart outright. The feeling of anxiety and responsibility that I had become accustomed to was gone, the familiar faces were no more to be seen, there was no need to keep up any longer, and so reaction came. I have told you what I thought would interest you most, and did not want to tire you. The every-day routine was all the same; the same annoyances; the same contrivances and devices to accomplish a great deal with little or no material. I shall think now that in *everything* there may be found vast undeveloped capacities. That boat had an amazing amount. I certainly never had so much comfort and satisfaction in anything in all my life, and the tearful thanks of those who thought in their gratitude that they owed a great deal more to us than they did, the blessings breathed from dying lips, and the comfort it has been to friends at home to hear all about the last sad hours of those they love, and know their dying messages of love to them; all this is a rich and full and overflowing reward for any labor and for any sacrifice. When you get this I shall be on my way down the river again, and will write from there if I can.

Yours, etc.,

M. E. B.

From the PRINCETON STANDARD.

Experience in the Western Hospital Boat Service.

St. Louis, March, 1863.

I HAVE been sitting leaning my head on my hands for the last half hour, trying to recall the most striking incidents of the last week of sad pleasure which I spent on the hospital boat coming up from Young's Point, and gleaning from my life among the soldiers what I think will interest you most and yet will not depress you too much. I see so much of "the shady side of nature," and know so well what it is to be haunted for days and weeks by some scene of heart-breaking sadness, and to meet it in my dreams whenever I close my eyes, that I like to bury such things in my own heart, and save others the pain of knowing the suffering they cannot relieve.

If you should ask me what our experience was on this last boat, how we fared, etc., I should answer you as the soldiers do when I question them about some campaign of special hardship: "It was pretty tough, ma'am." But remember I don't speak of it for one moment as a hardship. I knew perfectly well when I *'listed* that if I wanted to help the soldiers I must rough it with them, and learn to suffer as they did, and I find I can stand it bravely; but I lack one *important* quality for a soldier. *I cannot eat beans*, and never shall learn, I am afraid.

There is a soldier's song, of which they are very fond,

and which I shall copy for you some day, one verse of which often comes back to me :

“ So I’ve had a sight of drilling,  
And I’ve roughed it many days ;  
Yes, and death has nearly had me,  
Yet I think the service pays.”

Indeed it does—richly, abundantly, blessedly, and I thank God that he has honored me by letting me do a little and suffer a little for this grand old Union and the dear, brave fellows who are fighting for it.

Long before we reached Young’s Point the boat began to be put in readiness for the sick. The small bedsteads, which had been piled in the middle of the cabin, were put together and ranged through the cabin and along the guards (which were boarded in all round, with windows left here and there), and down on the boiler-deck, etc., and we were ready to take four hundred or more if necessary. This was different from anything I had yet experienced, waiting on the boat to welcome and take charge of the poor fellows as they came. Our boat lay at the edge of the swamp, where it was the driest, and the long train of ambulances and wagons as they stopped at the landing were met by the nurses from our boat, bringing stretchers for the sickest, or a strong arm to give support to those able to walk a mile ; and so, one by one, the places were all fillèd, and faces that soon grew familiar looked up at us from the little bedsteads. The idea of having a woman’s care, and the constant presence of a woman’s face, seemed to be a glad surprise. One poor fellow, who had been lying quietly watching me as I went round among the sick in my ward, broke out at last :

“ Oh ! I just love to lie here and look at you—it puts me in mind of home ;” and his eyes filled with tears at the remembrance of his mother and sisters away off in Iowa.

“ I am very sick,” said one poor fellow, as he held my hand tight in both his own, for fear I might slip away from him ; “ I am too weak to feed myself. Will you take me under your care and not let me suffer ?”

I promised him I would, that I would feed him always myself ; and so he closed his eyes and fell asleep, saying, “ Yes, I know you will.” He lived but a day or two, and always met me, as I came with his simple food, with such a grateful look, that when he was gone, and his place vacant, I never passed by it when I could avoid it, I missed him so. But for him the change was a blessed one. It was not long before he died, when I was talking to him of Christ and of His many mansions waiting for us all in heaven, that he clasped his hands, and with his eyes gazing upward through tears, exclaimed, “ Oh, Jesus ! precious Jesus ! what should I do without him ?”

I have never seen so many sick men together who were Christians, and this was an unspeakable comfort. I remember one evening in particular, when some very sick men had come on board, how I was struck by the brightening eyes, the eager, hearty response that came from each of them as I spoke of Christ’s love, and care, and pity for all who are in trouble. I was going about with some hot tea to revive and warm them, for it was late and very chilly, and as I gave it to them I had time for a few words.

I stopped by the bed of one poor fellow who seemed

too low almost to be disturbed, but he smiled and asked for a spoonful or two of tea, and seemed so revived that I ventured to say a few words to him too. I spoke of his being so far from home and friends, and then I tried to point him to that Friend, so strong, so close, so ready to help and comfort; and as I talked, such a glory seemed to overspread his pale, wasted face, that I waited for him to speak.

“I know Him; oh! yes, I have known Him for many long years,” he said. “I went away and left Him once, but since I went into the army I have come back to Him, and He has helped me to be faithful, and now, oh! if I could just be baptized.”

This was not possible, and he soon became satisfied that faith and love were all Christ asked of him, and then he begged me to read to him how Christ was crucified for sinners. One of the other ladies, who happened to be more at leisure, read to him as he had desired, and he listened eagerly to the end, but before another morning he was dead; he had seen Jesus as he is. I am often touched with their anxiety not to give trouble—“not to *bother*,” as they say. That same evening I found a poor exhausted fellow lying on a stretcher, on which he had just been brought in. There was no bed for him just then, and he was to remain there for the present, and looked uncomfortable enough with his knapsack for a pillow.

“I know some hot tea will do you good,” I said.

“Yes, ma’am,” he answered, “but I am too weak to sit up with nothing to lean against; it’s no matter—don’t bother about me,” but his eyes were fixed longingly on the smoking tea.

Everybody was busy, not even a nurse in sight, but the poor man must have his tea. I pushed away the knapsack, raised his head and seated myself on the end of the stretcher ; and, as I drew his poor tired head back upon my shoulder and half held him, he seemed, with all his pleasure and eager enjoyment of the tea, to be troubled at my being so bothered with him. He forgot I had come so many hundred miles on purpose to be "bothered." And so it was very often. They would lie and suffer for anything rather than disturb us if we seemed very much occupied.

There was in each ward, of course, every variety of complaint and condition. There were some in mine who tossed and moaned in constant delirium, and never knew me, though they would stop me with some anxious entreaty or some frightened question whenever I came near them ; and to me this was unspeakably distressing, to see these strong, athletic men brought down so low, terrified like children with the idlest fancies and begging me to help them. There were many who sank away from day to day, always saying, " I am better, if I was only not so weak," and died, still clinging to this dream of being well again. There were some who were able to totter round a little, if the day was mild, and there were a few who were called my " Hungry Brigade." They were free from sickness, some of them going home discharged, and needed stronger and more abundant food than I gave the others. Here the stores I had brought with me came into play. I had some condensed meat, some crackers and jellies, and many a surreptitious dinner was conveyed from my trunk to their beds or state-rooms, for fear the poor fellows too

sick to be allowed such food should clamor for it and have to be denied. Before they found out that I had stores of my own, and a sympathy for hungry people, they must have suffered a good deal. "I tell you what," said one of them to me afterward, "the first day I liked to have died for something more to eat, but I just thought I'd stick it through, and I did."

One night we had an awful storm, and the rain dashed through the roof and kept the beds so wet I was in despair. Fortunately we had a good many yards of India-rubber cloth, which we cut into lengths and spread over them. These had to be moved continually to meet the new streams which trickled down in fresh places every moment. I was very anxious about some who had high fevers, but fortunately they seemed not to suffer any ill effects; and just as we were all worn out, and the poor men were tired of lying with their heads under the blankets (for the leaks were very often right over their faces, and they had to cover their heads), just then the rain ceased and we went to our state-rooms to find them almost overflowed too. The boat had been fitted up, but the roof had not been thoroughly repaired, and after a boat has been used as a transport it will leak.

We lost twenty-one coming up, and some who were very low when we left the boat must have died since. They were all discharged at Memphis, according to orders received from the Medical Director at Young's Point. I longed to bring them on with us, so that we might still have watched over them, but there was plenty of room—and, they said, good care—in the Memphis hospitals, and the soldiers promised to write and tell us how they fared.



“And don't you all live in Memphis?” they asked, “and won't you take care of us in the hospital? and will we never see you again?”

This is the hardest of all; to leave them to the care of others just as we are learning to know them and to know what they need and what they like. I had one patient, a convalescent, who was a fine fellow, and so trustworthy that since he had regained his strength he had been of invaluable service to me. I could leave him the food or stimulant to give to the sickest men when I had other things to do, and know that he would give it faithfully and take the best care of them. Just before we parted he came to me with a little note, which he handed me without a word. “Read it at your leisure,” he said, when I asked him what it was. It contained a few honest, touching, simple words of thanks, written in the name of all the sick in my ward, and you may well imagine it is a greater treasure to me than an autograph letter from the greatest man on earth would be.

There is one aspect of the war that saddens me more and more every time I see it. It is the wrecks and shadows it leaves, instead of the strong athletic men that left their homes so little time ago. And all are so patient, so cheerful, and often so full of fire and enthusiasm, and I have never heard one word of regret that they had come.

I expected to have been on my way down again before this, but we have been detained by various things and are ready to start as soon as everything is ready, but it may not be until there is a battle either down the river or in Tennessee.

I don't know that I have ever told you how much I

am amused by the curiosity of people as to *how much salary I get*, and how often I am assailed with the question, "How much do you get a month?" At first I was indignant, now I laugh over it.

If I go down the river I will write again, and in the mean time I have enough to keep me busy with the sick at the barracks, where I still visit, and where I have been distributing lately the "currant wine" from Princeton. Yours, etc.,

M. E. B.

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From the BUFFALO EXPRESS.

Our Soldiers—Their Friends and Their Enemies at Home.

BY A LADY NURSE.

WHEN I left the soldiers this spring, with a heavy heart, unfit any longer for active service among them, I told them I felt sure I would find something still to do for them, and I am thankful that it has proved so. Among my pleasantest offices has been this of writing about them, trying to speak a word for those who have done so much for us that every heart should "delight to honor" them. Nothing in all my experience among them struck me more than the longing with which they turn for sympathy and encouragement to the people at home, and especially, as they say, to the "women at home." "What do they think of us at home?" "What are the women at home saying about us, and what are they doing for us?" These were the questions first upon their lips. It was pleasant then to point them to

the hospital stores with which our boat was loaded, and say, "This is what the women at home think of you; this is what they are doing for you." We might have told them, but we did not, how many at home were lukewarm and indifferent, or even worse; how many are living in peace and security in their quiet homes, so far from the war that the stories of suffering and bloodshed seem to them like idle tales. We might have told them, but we did not, how entirely such people have forgotten the soldiers, never rousing themselves to think that it is only that living wall of brave men and those banks of green graves that are seen on every plain and hillside that stand between our homes and the enemy, and keep those very scenes of suffering and bloodshed from our hearthstones. Oh! it is hard that the very peace and safety which the soldiers have bought for us with their blood, should be the cause of our forgetting them so often in their need.

Those only who have been among them month after month, know what it costs them to fight our battles and save our country.

And yet they ask nothing from us as a right. Everything we do for them they receive with the deepest gratitude. "Why do you take so much trouble for us?" they asked us while nursing them. "We are trying to repay you for all you have done for us," we told them. "Why, what did we ever do for you?" And then we reminded them that it was to save our country they had fought and been wounded, that it was for us they had lain all night upon the soaking ground ready for the morning march, or had stood for hours in rain and snow as pickets on some dangerous outpost. When we

told them this, they said, "Yes, that is true, but we never thought of it before." It is touching to see their enthusiastic reception of those who come to take care of them, and the child-like confidence with which they cast themselves upon our willingness and ability to help them. "Oh, boys!" said a little fellow to his sick companions, as the nurses were bringing them into our boat, "oh, boys! it is all right now, for the women have come down to look after us." He told us afterward, with a quivering lip, how his heart had bounded at the sight of a woman, for, "we knew that they had not forgotten us at home," he said, "when we saw they had sent you down to take care of us."

This is their dread—to be forgotten. "We are not discontented," they often say to us; "we are willing to bear all these hardships, and we never mean to come home till this thing is over, but we do want the people at home to strengthen and encourage us."

The soldiers look for this now more than ever, when home traitors are so busy trying to shake our confidence in them and theirs in us. I wish I could give you some faint idea of the indignation the soldiers feel toward the copperheads. "Their treason only makes us stand the firmer, and fight the better," they say; "for it shows us that we must make haste and crush the rebels and then come home and punish the copperheads. Let them wait till the war is over," they say, "and then ——" finishing the sentence with expressive looks and gestures. They keep a list of the copperheads in their own States, and this is well, for in a few years from now, when the old flag is floating from the Lakes to the Gulf, we shall need some proof in black and white of

the treason of those who will then call Heaven to witness their unwavering and devoted patriotism; but the stain of their dishonor will cleave to them from generation to generation, as even at this day it does to the Tories of the Revolution.

I will give you one instance, among the hundreds I have known, of their perfidious policy toward our soldiers. One of our Western soldiers, the only son of a loyal father, was ill at Young's Point, and about the time I was there, his cousin came down to see him, and when he was able to bear the journey, to take him home on furlough. He soon began to gain strength, his fever left him—he was pronounced out of danger and well enough to go home by the next boat. Soon after his cousin came, and brought him a letter, which proved to be from his uncle, a notorious copperhead, and it was worthy of him. It began in the usual style, deploring the iniquity of this abolition war, lamenting that his nephew had ever taken any part in it, and urging him that, as he was disgraced enough already by his connection with it, he should instantly wash his hands of the whole thing and come home, adding that his father agreed with him entirely, and urged him to give up and come home. "It is false," said the poor boy, starting up; "it is false, and he knows it," and he took another letter from under his pillow. "Here is one from my father written since that was, though it came sooner, and see what he says: 'My son, I love you better than anything on earth, but I would rather see you dead than that you should desert your post at such a time as this;'" and this is the way," said the poor fellow, "this is the way we are to be treated by such traitors

as my uncle, when we come down here to fight and die for our country." It was impossible to pacify him; his fever returned; he sank rapidly, and in a few hours was dead, killed by a copperhead. This is no fiction. A dozen witnesses can prove it, and the letter is still held in proper hands, to bear testimony to the death of that poor boy, whose body came up the river on its way to his poor father, at the same time that I did.

And if brave men ever needed and deserved our warmest support, it is now. The wounded and dying are calling to us for help from the victorious battle-fields of Pennsylvania, and from the intrenchments of Port Hudson, in a climate where disease and death have these summer months for a carnival season; and the brave men who have endured every hardship for so many months that they might plant our flag on the hills at Vicksburg, will need our care still. Of all who have filled soldiers' graves since the war commenced, the vast proportion have died from sickness. At Young's Point, last winter, we found 12,000 sick. At Helena, there were 5000 soldiers' graves, of whom scarcely any were wounded men.

And then one other thing we too often forget—what these men are, for whom our help is so often asked. Are they, as home traitors would have us believe, tired of their country's service, discontented with the administration, and so sick of the war that they are ready for peace on any terms? There may be a few such men in the army. To those of us who know how our soldiers are tampered with by these very home traitors, it would seem wonderful if there were not, but with such exceptions, the slander is utterly and entirely false.

We have an army of brave and earnest patriots, and the history of every battle abounds in facts to prove it. From among the hundreds of touching stories I could tell you, I will single just this one for an example, and such examples are met with every day in our hospitals.

Soon after the capture of one of the rebel forts in the West, a lady went into the hospital where the wounded had been taken. She was much attracted to two young men, lying side by side, all splintered and bandaged, so that they could not move hand or foot, but so cheerful and happy looking, that she said :

“Why, boys, you look very bright to-day !”

“Oh, yes !” they said, “we have been moved this morning.”

And she found that for six long weeks they had lain in one position, and for the first time that morning had been moved to the other side of their cot.

“And were you among those poor boys,” she asked, “who were left lying where you fell that bitter morning till you froze fast to the ground ?”

“Yes, ma’am,” they said ; “we were lying there two days. You know they had no time to attend to us, they had to go and take the fort.”

“And didn’t you think it very cruel in them to leave you to suffer so long ?”

“Why, no, ma’am ! we wanted them to go on and take the fort.”

“But when they took it, you were in too much agony to know or care for it ?”

“Oh, no, ma’am !” they answered, with flashing eyes and faces glowing with the recollections of that day,

“there were a whole lot of us wounded fellows on the hillside watching to see if they would get the fort ; when we saw they had it, every one of us that had a whole arm waved it in the air, and we hurrahed till the air rang again.”

Oh ! think of that scene, that hillside of wounded men, forgetting their own agony to cheer on their comrades and hurrah for the victory ! It is such cheerful patience, such heroic fortitude as this, that I have seen from day to day in my hospital life. Can we do too much for such men ? No, we can never do half enough. And as they never rest in their labors and sufferings for us, we must never rest in working for them till the war is over, and the few who are left come home to us again.

Yours truly,

M. E. B.

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Early in March she returned to St. Louis, expecting to make another trip ; but happily some circumstances prevented it, and she remained in that city with a troublesome cough and disease threatening, but still able to do the home work in the hospitals and among the refugees.

We will insert a few stanzas written about this time for the *Princeton Standard*, which record the experience of many of our patriotic women :



## Knitting for the Soldiers.

Here I sit at the same old work,  
Knitting and knitting from daylight till dark;  
Thread over and under and back and through,  
Knitting socks for—I don't know who;—  
But in fancy I've seen him, and talked with him too.

He is no hero of gentle birth;  
He's little in rank, but he's much in worth;  
He's plain of speech and strong of limb;  
He's rich in heart, but he's poor of kin;  
There are none at home to work for him.

He set his lips with a start and a frown,  
When he heard that the dear old flag was shot down  
From the walls of Fort Sumter, and flinging away  
His tools and his apron, stopped but to say  
To his comrades, "I'm going, whoever may stay,"  
And was 'listed and gone by the close of the day.

And whether he watches to-night on the sea,  
Or kindles his camp-fire on "lone Tybee,"  
By river or mountain, wherever he be,  
I know he's the noblest of all that are there;  
The promptest to do and the bravest to dare;  
The strongest in trust and the last in despair.

So here I sit at the same old work,  
Knitting socks for the soldiers from daylight till dark,  
And whispering low, as the thread flies through,  
To him who shall wear them,—I don't know who:—  
"Ah, soldier, fight bravely, be patient, be true,  
For some one is knitting and praying for you."

In a letter to her family, written from St. Louis, she says:

“ I shall soon now turn my face Eastward, and I have more and more to do as my time here grows shorter. I have been at the hospital every day this week, and at the Government rooms, where we prepare the Government work for the poor women, four hundred of whom we supply with work every week. I have also a family of refugees to look after, so I do not lack employment.”

She had determined to spend the summer among her friends at the East for rest and recuperation, and in the autumn to return and fix herself, while the war lasted, in one of the Western hospitals, where she could be entirely devoted to the work which she so much loved. But it was not so to be. Her strength was almost spent, and a willing heart was all that she now had to offer.

About the middle of May, Miss Breckinridge left St. Louis and spent a fortnight at Chicago, with her friend Mrs. Hoge, who had been with her on the river, and who now claimed her assistance in making their experiences useful to the home work, by visiting among the Ladies' Aid Societies in the neighborhood of that city. A letter, written by this friend nearly a year

afterward, recalls some interesting and characteristic incidents:

March 13th, 1865.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—

An interview to-day with a loved and loving relative of our sainted friend, Margaret E. Breckinridge, has vividly recalled some scenes of her hospital life. Brightly as she shone elsewhere, I still think she was nowhere so peerless as in the midst of the "boys in blue," cheering, soothing, and nursing them. I stood beside her one day in the midst of a group of soldiers, on a steamer in the rear of Vicksburg, during the fearful winter siege of that rebellious city. Even the devoted band of women who had gone down to nurse the sick and suffering soldiers in that dreary place, felt that she outstripped all in her devotion, and was gaining a martyr's crown almost too soon. One present chided her and said:

"You must hold back, you are going beyond your strength; you will die if you are not more prudent!"

Her slender form dilated, and her keen eye sparkled with sublime earnestness as she said, "Well, what if I do? Shall men come here by tens of thousands and fight, and suffer, and die, and shall not some women be willing to die to sustain and succor them?"

The thrill of joy that her remark gave was not confined to those that heard it from her lips. A good man who stood by told it at the prayer-meeting of the soldiers that same night. It brought forth tears and blessings, and her name and spirit became the watchword and strengthener of many a brave heart and strong arm. Many a prayer was offered for the heroic little army

nurse, and if earnest petitions could have altered the fiat of the Almighty, our beloved young friend would not now be singing the new song and wearing the martyr's crown.

It has been my privilege to know many devoted women in our American hospitals, but I can truly say no one has impressed me as she did. Her fragile form, beaming face, musical voice, and youthful appearance were wonderfully fascinating to the soldiers. Her transparent purity and simple dignity awed them, and, as I have followed her from cot to cot, I have heard, after she had passed, the outburst of a soldier's enthusiastic gratitude again and again.

"Ain't she an angel?" said a gray-headed veteran to me as I followed her on the steamer "City of Alton," to assist her in giving the boys their breakfast. "She never seems to tire, she is always smiling, and don't seem to walk—she flies, all but—God bless her!"

Said another, a fair boy of seventeen summers, as she smoothed his hair and told him, with glistening eyes, he would soon see his mother and the old homestead, and be won back to life and health, "Ma'am, where do you come from? How could such a lady as you are come down here to take care of us poor, sick, dirty boys?"

Said she, "I consider it an honor to wait on you, and wash off the mud you've waded through for me."

"Said another, "Lady, please write down your name and let me look at it, and take it home, to show my wife who wrote my letters and combed my hair and fed me. I don't believe you're like other people."

And then, as she passed on, they would fold their

hands and say, "God bless her and spare her life." He did, till her work was done, and then she was not, for God took her. Her years of army life might count four-score in usefulness and blessings. They must not be measured as we count time.

In her tour of a week with me, through the Northwest, to visit the Aid Societies, her earnestness and whole-souled devotion to the soldiers' interests overcame her timidity, and she was induced to tell some interesting facts concerning the sufferings of the soldiers and loyal people in the border States. Her memory is fragrant now among these simple-hearted, patriotic people. She stirred them up to increased labor, and the mention of her name, and allusion to her death, brings forth tears, often sobs, from those who only saw and heard her once, but they loved her. She looked beyond the surface and loved and valued them.

She plead her own cause eloquently when admonished to rest from her hospital work. She had counted the cost and stood ready to die, if need be, as the hero in the front ranks of battle.

I saw her last in Philadelphia in June, 1864. The frail tenement of her soaring spirit was tottering. The pins were being removed surely, but noiselessly. Her great grief was that she was laid aside from work, just, as she said, when she was learning to do it so much better. Her great desire to recover was that she might labor till the war was over. None of us realized that she was so near her rest. Her crown of rejoicing must, methinks, be richly studded with immortal souls; for in her army work she preached Christ and him crucified. Her Christ-like self-abnegation and devotion sealed her

exhortations, and I doubt not led many to the New Jerusalem, where they were waiting and have received her now. God grant the beautiful, inspiring lesson of her life and death may not be lost to those left behind.

Yours truly,

J. C. H.

Early in June of that year, Miss Breckinridge reached Niagara, on her way to the East, and spent there nearly the whole of the month: still at work in the way of giving information and encouragement to the loyal women of that neighborhood, but feeble and exhausted, and, for the first time, obliged in a measure to yield to her infirmities. She wrote: "They tell me I look tired all the time, and so I feel. I am never hardly fresh and bright, but hope I shall be a great deal better when I get to Princeton." And again, when speaking of her physician: "He says that I will soon, he thinks, be well and strong, and able to go back to the hospitals in the fall."

The year that followed this time, brought to her only a succession of these hopes doomed to disappointment; like phantoms receding, as day after day brought but little relief to her feeble frame, yet only receding; for it was always the goal toward which she looked, and her spirit

chafed at the long delay. Everything that physicians or friends could suggest was tried for her relief. She spent some weeks at the sea-shore, and for a time the air and bathing seemed to give her strength; but she received no permanent benefit, and the poison still lurked in her veins. The winter was spent in Philadelphia, waiting, amidst the kind attentions of old friends and new, for the health so much desired but never to return.

Another spring came, and, though still unable to make much exertion, she determined to put in execution a plan that had engaged her thoughts during the winter, as one which would prepare her for greater skill and usefulness in the army hospitals whenever she might be able to resume her place there.

A letter from a friend much endeared to Miss Breckinridge by being associated in this undertaking, and by the hospitality and kind attention with which she and her family soothed the hours of sickness and sorrow, gives an interesting sketch of this portion of her work:

PHILA., May 5, 1865.

MY DEAR FRIEND :—

This day is full of sweet memories of your dear Margaret, as it is the anniversary of the day she entered upon her brief residence at the Episcopal Hospital, a residence which she purposed should extend to three months; before the termination of that short period her labors on earth were over, and she had been received by a loving Saviour into that "home not made with hands, eternal in the heavens," where is no sorrow or suffering, "the inhabitants whereof shall not say I am sick."

I had often heard Margaret spoken of by friends who loved and admired her, but I never met her till she came to talk with me of her wish to spend a few weeks at the Episcopal Hospital, that she might acquire more experience in nursing, especially in surgical cases, so that in the autumn, she could resume her work of love among the soldiers more efficiently and confidently than before. But, beside this, she expressed an earnest desire to do what she could for the spiritual welfare of the patients in our hospital, hoping in the time spent there to acquire more facility in speaking for Christ, and more familiarity in dispensing religious truth than she then had. Her ardent desire was to work for Christ in the noble army which was fighting in a cause only second in her heart's affection to the cause of the Saviour himself.

She came to the hospital a year ago; lovely in form and feature, full of animation and enthusiasm, overflowing with sympathy and tenderness. In her presence there was always sunshine, and her bright spirit tinged and influenced all about her.



I so rejoiced to welcome her as a helper, and, hoping against hope, I indulged sometimes in the vision that she might identify herself permanently with us. That evening I had a Mother's Meeting of about thirty poor women from the neighborhood, who were in the habit of bringing their sewing and thus occupying themselves, while I spoke to them individually or read aloud. Here Margaret was at once at home, talking to these poor women of their interests, domestic and eternal, sympathizing with their troubles, and leading them to Him who alone could bear their heavy burdens. She was a great help to me every Wednesday afterward, and won the hearts of these people as those only can who know how to "condescend to men of low degree."

Here was one great secret of her usefulness; she had the power of adaptation in her intercourse with her inferiors, happily blending that dignity which inspired them with respect, with that gentle sympathy which won for her their gratitude and love.

We sat together in her room till midnight, interchanging views and plans for Christian usefulness, and then together poured out our united supplications for the blessing of our Heavenly Father upon us, co-laborers in the hospital. Margaret often alluded to this afterward, saying, she had felt it to be a consecration of her work then, and I felt we were no longer strangers, but of one heart and one mind in Christ Jesus. Without delay she began to interest herself in the patients, spending an hour or two in the morning, following the surgical nurse, who instructed her in the best mode of bandaging and treating the various wounds. She was not satisfied with *seeing* this, but often washed and

dressed the wounds with her own hands, saying to me with her bright smile, "I shall be able to do this for the soldiers when I get back to the army." The patients could not understand this, and would often expostulate, and say, "Oh, no, miss! that is not for the like of you to do;" but she would playfully insist, and have her way.

Her attention in the wards was constant. With her little Testament in her hand she went from one bedside to another, really a ministering angel to all there; cheering the desponding, encouraging the timid and doubtful. At twilight it was her custom to sing hymns in the ward, and long after she had left us, her sweet voice was spoken of as a blessing lost by the sick and suffering.

She was with us but one short month. In that time a call was made for ladies of experience to go to the front after the dreadful battles beyond Fredericksburg. Her heart responded immediately to the call, and though her friends opposed it on the score of her delicate health, she decided to join two friends who expected to leave in three days, and so made all her preparations; but changes in the field hospitals postponed their going, and finally the necessity passed, and again Margaret talked of the autumn, when she would be with the army.

I was away from the hospital on the 2d of June, but heard that Margaret had an attack of erysipelas. I was quite alarmed, and sent to Dr. M. to know if it would be safe to bring her to town. He approved, and I went out early next day, and was glad to find her aunt with her. She consented to be removed, and on the 3d it was my privilege to bring her home with me. She was

not considered ill, but suffered much discomfort, yet was unselfish, uncomplaining, and cheerful. Her face was swollen, and so disfigured one could not have recognized her; she jested a great deal about it, and after a day or two was in bright spirits.

Then came news of the fighting before Richmond, and the probability that Col. Porter had fallen. It was thought best to conceal this from her, and I shall not soon forget how painfully her joyousness smote upon our hearts, which were trembling for the sorrow which seemed impending. At last came the awful certainty that the brother whom she loved, and about whose safety she had been solicitous for a fortnight, had fallen in the terrible struggle at Cold Harbor, fallen nobly, leading his men with heroic valor.

This blow fell upon her with overwhelming force. One wild cry of agony, one hour of unmitigated sorrow, and then she sweetly, submissively bowed herself to the will of her Heavenly Father and was still. She seemed more of heaven than earth as she talked over her past life, and the discipline she had passed through, praying earnestly that this sorrow might be sanctified to her and to those more closely connected with the departed. I recollect so well her intense longing that little Peter, the representative of her darling sister, now left fatherless, should be spared for a life of honor and usefulness.

We only had her with us a few days. I did not think she was strong enough to bear the journey and the excitement which awaited her at Baltimore, but she was so anxious to go that it was thought best she should do so. I little thought, when I parted from her in the car, that on earth I should behold her face no more. We

talked of meeting in the fall, and hoped that some association might again bring us together as in the past month. Almost her last words to me were, "I feel as if my life's work was truly to begin now." Strangely indeed were these words fulfilled: in a few weeks she had begun that life eternal which alone is the true life—no more labor, no more sorrow, no more discipline. For her, the unspeakable bliss of being "forever with the Lord," whose footsteps she had so closely followed on earth: for us is left the fragrant memory of her many virtues, and the sweet example of her daily life: "she being dead, yet speaketh."

While writing this note I have been interrupted by a visit from an old colored woman who was in the hospital last spring. I asked if she remembered Miss Breckinridge? She looked wonderingly at the question, saying emphatically:

"I never could forget her, she was so good to old Sydney. Why, she never went to her bed without looking in on me to see how I was getting on. Oh! I never saw her like. She used to sing to me too; now she is singing Jesus' praise in heaven. She was *my* lady."

Margaret was a universal favorite with the officers, nurses, patients, and lady visitors, and many a tear was shed when the intelligence of her death reached us. I have no incidents to give, but wish simply to express to you my admiration and love for her whom you have lost.

Affectionately, \_\_\_\_\_

The sad events related in this letter—sickness, bereavement, and sorrow—followed each

other in quick succession, and changed, for the time, Miss Breckinridge's plans of usefulness. She had originally intended to spend the close of the summer at Niagara, and she at once determined to join the afflicted family of Colonel Porter at Baltimore, and return home with them, saying, "I can do more good at Niagara than anywhere else just now." It was by a kind Providence that her brother had been called to the East on business at that time, and was ready to take charge of her on the journey, and in a measure to relieve the anxiety of those who feared that the fatigue and excitement would be too great for her feeble frame. After a week's rest in Baltimore at the house of a kind friend, she accompanied the sad party to Niagara, and apparently bore the journey with comfort and safety; but the night after her arrival at the house of her cousin, Miss Porter, she became alarmingly ill, and lay down, never to rise again from her couch of languor and weariness. The exhaustion of her system was so complete, that very soon hardly a vestige remained of her former vivacity and earnestness. Though desirous of recovering in order to finish her work, which she felt was only half done, yet she again and

again said that she did not fear to die, and was willing to leave herself entirely in God's hands. Her state of mind, during her whole sickness, seemed to be expressed in a remark made to one who was bending anxiously over her. She said quietly, "Underneath are the everlasting arms;" and there she rested through all the vicissitudes of hope and discouragement by which those around her were exercised. For more than five weeks life and death hung trembling in the balance, and gave opportunity for those unwearied attentions of friends and physician which can never be forgotten, and which, if it were possible, would have averted the stroke of death. But it could not be; and on the 27th of July calmly and peacefully her spirit passed away.

It had always been the earnest desire of Miss Breckinridge to be buried at Niagara, near her sister; and she had requested her friends that this wish might be gratified whenever her death should occur. The providence of God, in bringing her to that place, made it easy to fulfill the request; and she was laid in the cemetery, by the side of those whom she loved so well, where the neighboring waters, with their ceaseless mono-

tone, sound a continual dirge. From all the neighborhood were assembled those—kindred and friends—who had known and loved her when she so often dwelt among them; and with their offerings of flowers they followed her to her last resting-place. It is only a resting place; for she is not dead, but sleepeth, and waits for the angel's call to wake to newness of life.











